SPECIAL ALL-JONNY QUEST ISSUE!

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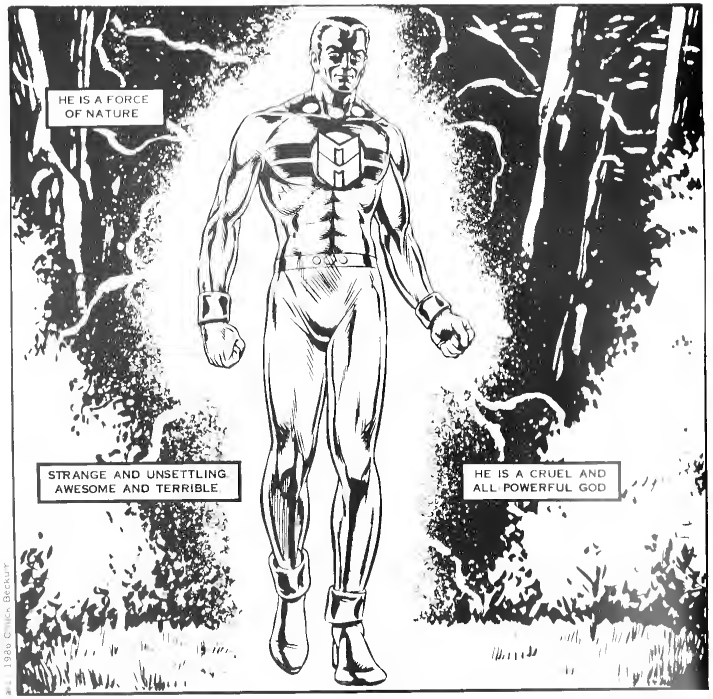
AMAZING HEROES



BEYOND ANY HOPE OF MERCY.

MIRACLEMAN

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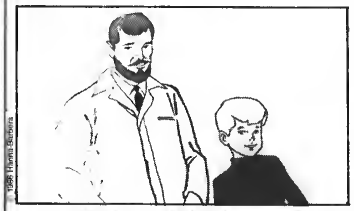
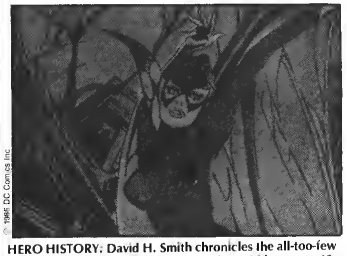
PREVIEW: Ed Sample interviews Bill Loebs and Comico's Diana Schutz on the new JONNY QUEST series on page 27.



INTERVIEW: David W. Olbrich interviews Doug Wildey, the creator of RIO, JONNY QUEST, and EDDIE RACE on page 34.



HERO HISTORY: David H. Smith chronicles the all-too-few adventures of DC Comics' lovely Black Orchid on page 49.

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by David Smay

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by J. Collier

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by David Gross

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by J. Collier

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by David W. Olbrich

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Page 61: Amazing Readers
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by The Readers

Page 66: Small Press Watch
More notes from the tiny publishers.
by Scott McCloud

OUR COVER:

Doug Wildey returns with this superb JONNY QUEST painting done especially for this issue! © 1986 Hanna-Barbera.

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EDITORIAL by David Smay

Bom-pa-pa Bom-pa-pa Bom-pa-pa . . . You know. Those bitchin' drums over the opening credits of *Jonny Quest*. For years I practiced my pterodactyl screech from JQ and it wasn't until I did this issue that I learned that I had actually been imitating a pteranodon. Boy, talk about embarrassed. When you can't tell a pterodactyl from a pteranodon it's time to hang up your leathery wings. There are other *Quest* images that have stuck with me over the years: Jade Jezebel spotting a fake Race with one kiss; Lizardmen scattering beneath a powerboat; Jonny and Race practicing judo on the beach. There aren't a lot of memorable animated scenes on Saturday mornings nowadays thanks to a lobby group called ACT (Action for Children's Television). With the same good intentions as Dr. Wertham these people have succeeded in thoroughly blandenizing kidvid. Hey, we're not talking about drawing a moustache on the Mona Lisa but at least shows like *Jonny Quest* were entertaining. It's easier to mainline corn syrup than watch a show like *The Get Along Gang*.

These shows are like some bastard offspring of Medieval Morality Plays and *Aesop's Fables*. They don't tell stories, they teach lessons. Don't get me wrong, there are a few lessons kids need to learn. Don't touch Uncle David's New York Dolls album. Don't eat M&M's you find in the cat's litterbox. Don't do shots on an empty stomach. Kids are gonna absorb a lifetime of politically correct role-models and conventional morality and it's not going to make a single one of them a better person.

Morality is too complex and personal to be handled by video wallpaper. Conrad and Dickens can teach you something about hard, human choices. The only thing kids are going to learn from *Strawberry Shortcake* are some cynical lessons about marketing. I'd much rather "expose" (hate using that word—It puts art on the same level as flashers and radioactive isotopes) children to good storytelling in the hopes that they'll develop a taste for the stuff. Oh sure, there's the off chance that little Oswald is going to use "Mystery of the Lizardmen" as an excuse to crack Greta Lou's noggin with a lead pipe. There's also the possibility that the way Oswald Sr. treats Mrs. Oswald just might have more influence on junior than television. TV is a convenient scapegoat because it's sensitive to pressure and it doesn't have many defenders. But the itchy, uncomfortable truth is that *Jonny Quest* isn't responsible for raising our children, we are.

A few weeks back I caught a double feature of *Pee Wee's Big Adventure* and a program of Warner Bros. cartoons—including a healthy dose of Chuck Jones stuff. Now, the Mace prefers Tex Avery's work but I think Chuck's tough to top. His cartoons are anarchic, inventive and hilarious. They're also frequently violent. Not in a mean-spirited way but they'll definitely shake you out of any complacent notions of what's right or wrong. I walked out of that theater feeling good and thinking Deep Thoughts about art and morality. I guess what I'm trying to say is that censorship, no matter how well intentioned, is unhealthy in a free society. It's like anorexia of the mind, a perverse need to deprive our society of ideas. Even for children, the idea that themes like sexuality or violence should be censured seems suspect. I'm not advocating that pre-schoolers be given subscriptions to *Hustler* and *Soldier of Fortune* but if children are raised with free access to ideas then they'll be able to see those magazines as the tawdry, facile publications that they are.

Anyway, if you're standing around your comic store thumbing through this issue . . . *Hey, this isn't a library!* Buy this issue, it's a good one. Jim Korkis reviews JQ's old show, including a plot synopsis of every episode. Ed Sample previews the *Jonny Quest* comic book written by Bill Loebs and DWO has a truly fascinating interview with Doug Wildey. Did you know that *Jonny Quest* had a working title of *The Saga of Chip Balloo*? Of course you didn't; that's why you have to buy this issue.

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Newsflashes

NOT JUST AN X-MEN REPRINT: The first issue of ***X-Men Classics*** will feature, in addition to a partial reprint of ***Giant-Size X-Men #1*** (the one that introduced the new team), 20 pages of new material by CHRIS CLAREMONT and JOHN BOLTON expanding on material from the original story. The cover is by ARTHUR ADAMS, from a sketch by JOHN ROMITA, Jr., and the book, a May release, will sell for $1.00.

The second issue will feature 15 pages of new material by the same team, detailing the beginning of the Storm/Jean Grey friendship.

IT'S ANNUAL TIME: BOB LAYTON is the writer and penciller, and MARC SILVESTRI the inker of the first ***X-Factor Annual***, shipping in June. ***Avengers Annual #15***, by DANNY FINGEROTH and STEVE DITKO, will continue into ***West Coast Avengers Annual #1***, by STEVE ENGLEHART and MARK BRIGHT . . . the ***New Mutants Annual*** (#2) is by CHRIS CLAREMONT and ALAN DAVIS . . . And the ***Marvel Age Annual*** focuses on the ever-enigmatic New Universe.

MARVEL NOTES: ***Elektra: Assassin*** by FRANK MILLER and BILL SIENKIEWICZ premieres in June . . . ***Howard the Duck #33*** will ship in late May. CHRISTOPHER STAGER wrote the issue, and original Howard artist VAL MAYERIK drew it . . . ***G.I. Joe Missions*** is a new title, premiering in June; the creative team is LARRY HAMA, writer, and HERB TRIMPE, artist . . . SID JACOBSON, JOHN BUSCEMA, and ROMEO TANGHAL will handle the ***Marvel Superspecial*** adaptation of the JIM HENSON film ***Labyrinth***, and June sees the premiere of a new Star Comic, ***Hugga Bunch***, based on the Kenner toy.

MARVEL HEROES AND VILLAINS: Legion, Professor Xavier's son, returns in ***New Mutants #44***, that issue features a cover by BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH . . . ***West Coast Avengers #13*** features the return of Zzzax, as well as the menaces of Graviton, Halflife, and Quantum. The Abomination returns in this year's ***Hulk Annual***, by DANNY FINGEROTH and SAL BUSCEMA . . . Namor, Byrrah, Marrina, and Attuma all guest star in ***Alpha Flight #39*** and ***Avengers #272***.

John Byrne bows in at DC with a story in this year's ***Teen Titans Annual****. Here's a pencilled panel from that tale, written, of course, by Marv Wolfman.*

GRENDEL'S BACK: The "Grendel" back-up in Comico's ***Mage*** will be concluding with the 14th issue of that title. However, the character will be getting his own series next October. Series creator MATT WAGNER, who will be writing the book, will be joined by new penciller ARNOLD PANDER and inker JAY (***Threat***) GELDHOF on the series.

KNIGHTS IN COLOR: This summer, Comics Interview will release a 48-page, full-color ***Southern Knights Annual***. Under the hands of the usual creative team, the double-sized story will reveal the secret origins of the Knights, as well as the final fate of the unworshipped gods. The book sells for $2.50.

A page from ***History of the DC Universe****: art by George Perez*

PEREZ ON TITANS: GEORGE PEREZ is too busy with his work on the three-part, full-color ***History of the DC Universe*** to pencil the final issue of ***DC Challenge***, so that one will be handled by a round-robin of artists. (He will do the cover, however, with inks by TERRY AUSTIN.)

After the ***History*** project is finished, Perez will keep himself busy with his projected ***Wonder Woman*** series, and plans eventually to return to ***Teen Titans*** as the artist and co-plotter.

TRUFAN ADVENTURES: ***Trufan Adventure Theatre***, WARD BATTY and CHARLES WILLIAMS' comic-book version of their satirical *Comics Buyer's Guide* strip, will graduate to bi-monthly frequency after the third issue. That issue will also feature a hologram on the cover. Future issues will include a series called "Shiso—That Darn Robot!" as well as "The Great Death Bonanza," in which one of the creators dies.

SCHOLARSHIPS: ***Elementals*** creator BILL WILLINGHAM and Comico the Company, in association with the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art, have announced that they will be awarding four annual thousand-dollar scholarships to students at the school who are in their second year. Two of the students will receive the "Elementals Scholarship" based on their pencilling skills, while two others will receive the "Comico Sequential Art Scholarship" for their storytelling skills.

A KILLER TITLE: ***Murder: Tales of Psychological Tension*** is a new three-part series edited by ROBIN SNYDER for Renegade Press. It premieres in August. The three issues will include: covers by DAN DAY and DAVE DAY, ALEX TOTH, and CARMINE INFANTINO; a "violent" Static story by STEVE DITKO; the "Weird Women" series by RICH MARGOPOULOS and DAN DAY; "Face Up to It" by ALEX TOTH; and work by ERNIE COLON, BRAD FOSTER, JIM STENSTRUM and ERIK LARSEN, and more.

Steve Ditko's violent "Static" story from ***Murder***

IMAGINE THAT: Now under new management, Just Imagine Graphix Press, which has in the past published work by BILL LOEBS and PHIL FOGLIO, returns this summer with two titles: the revived ***Just Imagine Comics and Stories***, and the brand new ***Just Imagine's Special***.

The quarterly ***Special*** series will focus on a different concept and creative team every issue. The premiere issue, due out in June, features Mildly Microwaved Pre-Pubescent Kung Fu Gophers, in a story written by George Macas and drawn by Don Casey.

Just Imagine Comics and Stories #9, released the following month, will contain: "Dixie Belle" by L. DAVID BANK and RICK TAYLOR (who provided the cover); "Holbrook," by MARK A. ("Clonezone the Hilariator") NELSON; "Bananaman" by JACK

Southern Belle" coming in ***Just Imagine Comics and Stories****: art by Rick Taylor*

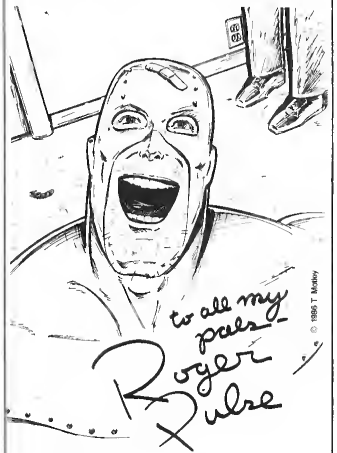
HERMAN, JILL THOMPSON, and JEFF DEE, "Communion" by JIM BERTRAND, and "Dinosaur Tales" by MARK A. NELSON.

Each of these titles runs 32 black-and-white pages with color covers, and sells for $1.50.

MORE MOORE, MORE!: This summer, Titan Books will be releasing no fewer than four black-and-white albums reprinting ***2000 A.D. Weekly*** material written by ALAN MOORE. The entire "Halo Jones" saga, drawn by IAN GIBSON, will be printed in three 56-page albums, released monthly from July to September. And the infamous "D.R. and Quinch" series will be collected, in its integrity (including the first episode, which has never been published in the U.S.), in a 96-page album, also in September. ALAN DAVIS will draw the cover to the "D.R. and Quinch" album, and Gibson will handle his three covers. Moore will write introductions to all four books, which will fall in the $8.95-$9.95 price range.

WRESTLING IN COMICS: ***Steel Pulse*** relates the "agony and tribulations of a former pro wrestling champion," Roger "Steel" Pulse, "who can escape neither past nor destiny as he is forced out of retirement to face Sardonicus, the evil wrestler and his arch-enemy who returns from the grave, seeking revenge!" The series, which is written and drawn by T. MOTLEY, premieres in early May, with a cover price of $2.00 for 32 black-and-white pages. The back-up, "Sherlock Jones, Wrestling Detective, in the Case of the Diverted Death Grip," is written by DENNIS PIMPLE and RICHARD FLORENCE.

(Some of these news columns are more fun to write than others.)



Where is Cyndi Lauper when we need her?

Silly Cover

By David Gross

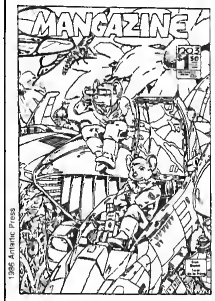
Coming DISTRACTIONS

MAY 16-31

AIRCEL PUBLISHING

☐ **SAMURAI #4**
All by **Pat McEown & B. Blair**
[$1.70 black-and-white comic; ships May 15]

ANTARTIC PRESS



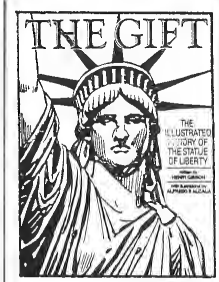
☐ **MANGAZINE #3**
Featuring stories and art including "Tiger-X" and "Mighty Tiny" by **Ben Dunn**, "Mark 2 Squad" by **Frank Ceetillo**, "Enemy Lines" by **Scott Kuester and Tommy Pone**, and "Asteroid Joe" by **Herb Mellette**
[$1.50; direct-sales black-and-white comic; ships May 23]

BAM PRODUCTIONS

☐ **ADAM AND EVE A.D #4**
Story: **Bill Murray**
Art: **Sherp/Zimmermen/Mertinec**
[$1.50 black-and-white comic; ships in May]

BLACKTHORNE

☐ **BETTY BOOP, BOOK TWO**
Betty jumps out of burning buildings, outruns tigers, free falls from a plane, and survives.
[$5.95 72-page direct-sales squarebound book; ships in May]



☐ **THE GIFT**
A history of the Statue of Liberty.
Written by: **Henry Gibson**
Art: **Alfredo Alcala**
[$5.95 48-page direct-sales squarebound book; ships in May]

☐ **PRINCE VALIANT BOOK ONE**
Val meets the creature in the hills, encounters the Dawn people, and breaks his arm in a tournament.
Story: **Hal Foster**
Art: **John Cullen Murphy**
[$5.95 72-page direct-sales squarebound book; ships in May]

☐ **STAR HAWKS BOOK TWO**
The Hawks continue to battle for the safety of the universe.
Story: **Ron Goulart**
Art: **Gil Kane**
[$5.95 72-page direct-sales squarebound book; ships in May]

☐ **TALES OF THE GREEN BERET BOOK TWO**
The continuation of the classic war strip.
Story: **Jerry Coplin**
Art: **Joe Kubert**
[$5.95 72-page direct-sales squarebound book; ships in May]

COMICO COMICS

☐ **ROBOTECH MASTERS #8**
The alien masters plot to raid a nearby city.
Story: **Mike Baron**
Art: **Vokes/Byers/Wilson**
Cover: **Ken Steacy**
[$1.50 direct-sales color comic; ships 5/16]

DC COMICS

☐ **ACTION #583**
Last issue for four months. What's in store for Superman, his best friends and worst enemies!
Story: **Alan Moore**
Art: **Curt Swan**
[75¢ color comic; ships 6/13; newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **ADVENTURES OF THE OUTSIDERS #37**
The Outsiders' ocean voyage is interrupted by the Marine Marauder.
Story: **Mike W. Barr**
Art: **Davis & Neary**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **ALL-STAR SQUADRON #61**
Retelling for the first time since its original publication in the 1940s, the "secret origin" of Liberty Belle.
Story: **R. & D. Thomes**
Art: **Harrie & DeZuniga**
[75¢ color comic; ships 6/13; newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **BLUE DEVIL #28**
A real live fan is the guest star in this wild and wooly yarn.
Story: **Dan Mishkin**
Art: **Kupperberg & Collins**
Cover: **Collins & Martin**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **BOOSTER GOLD #8**
Brainiac 5, Chameleon Boy and Ultra

Boy guest in the conclusion of Booster's origin
Story Dan Jurgens
Art/Cover Jurgens & DeCarlo
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **THE DARK KNIGHT #4**
Superman guests in the climax of the series. *[NOTE: This will be delayed.]*
Story/Art Frank Miller
Inks Klaus Janson
Color Lynn Varley
[$2.95 48-page squarebound full-color comic on white paper, ships 5/27]

☐ **DC CHALLENGE #11**
Enter the Bizarros! Also Adam Strange and Supes end a cast of thousands.
Story Marv Wolfman
Art Giffen & Tenghel
[$1.50 color comic on white paper, ships 6/13]

☐ **DETECTIVE COMICS #566**
Who are Batman's foes? Learn as we prepare for Batman #400. Plus Green Arrow.
Story Doug Moench
Art Colan & Bob Smith
Cover Colan & Giordano
[75¢ color comic, ships 6/13, newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **GREEN LANTERN CORPS #204**
Arisia's got dem puberty blues
Story Steve Englehart
Art Ernie Colon
Cover Steton & Petterson
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **HAWKMAN #2**
The Hawks infiltrate the Hyathis Corp. for a rematch with the Shadow Thief.
Story Tony Isabelle
Art Howell & Heck
Cover Howell & Giordano
[75¢ color comic, ships 6/13, newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **INFINITY, INC. #30**
How will the Infinitors handle their grief now tha the JSA is gone forever?
Story R. & D. Thomes
Art McFarlane & DeZuniga
[$1.50 color comic on white paper, ships 5/27]

☐ **LOIS LANE #2**
Lois' obsession over mission children escalates and none of her friends can help.
Story Mindy Newell
Art/Cover Gray Morrow
[$1.50 48-page color comic, ships 6/13, newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **LORDS OF THE ULTRA-REALM #4**
Returning to Ultra-Realm, Falkon battles the Lord of War as Rage terrorizes Earth!
Story Doug Moench
Art/Cover Pat Broderick
[$1.50 color comic on white paper, ships 6/13]

☐ **NEW TEEN TITANS #24**
Introducing the Hybrid, a new super group that will not only plague the Titans but the whole DC universe.
Story Marv Wolfman
Art Barreto & Tenghal
[$1.50 color comic on white paper, ships 5/27]

☐ **STAR TREK ANNUAL #2**
Revealed at last! The end of the five-year mission and a return to Talos IV.
Story Mike Barr
Art Jurgens & B. Smith
Cover Cowan & Villagren
[$1.25 48-page color comic, ships 6/13, newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **SUPER POWERS #1**
Orion and Mr. Miracle now govern Apokolips. Plastic Man, Capt. Marvel and Cyborg join the Super Powers team. Can they stop Tyr from freeing the imprisoned Darkseid?
Story Paul Kupperberg
Art/Cover Infantino & Marcos
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **SWAMP THING #52**
Swamp Thing heads to Gotham City in search of Abby.
Story Alan Moore
Art Veitch & Alcala
Cover Steve Bissette
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **TALES OF THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #339**
Five new members join.
Story Paul Levitz
Art Lightle & Mehlstedt
Cover Steve Lightle
[75¢ color comic, ships 6/13, newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **TEEN TITANS SPOTLIGHT#2**
The conclusion of Starfire in Africa.
Story Merv Wolfman
Art Cowen & Giordano
[75¢ color comic, ships 6/13, newsstand o/s 6/26]

☐ **WARLORD #109**
Warlord's battle with Lamia and Mortalla reaches a shattering climax.
Story Michael Fleisher
Art Ron Rendall
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **WHO'S WHO #19**
Queue up for Q's and Argue over the R's.
Text E. Nelson Bridwell
Art Various
Cover Perez & Giordano
[$1.00 color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

DELUXE COMICS

☐ **WALLY WOOD'S T.H.U.N.D.E.R. AGENTS #6**
"Raven"
Plot/Pencils George Perez
Script Denn Thomee
Inks Brett Breeding
"Lightning"
Plot/Pencils Keith Giffen
Script T. & M. Bierbaum
Inks Rick Bryant
"THUNDER Death in the Stars"
Featuring a crossover among THUNDER Agents, Codename: Danger, and The Next Man.
Story Roger McKenzie
Art Rich Buckler
"The Next Man"
Story Roger McKenzie
Art Cockrum & Argondezzi
[$2.00 48-page color comic on white paper, ships 5/30]

ECLIPSE COMICS

☐ **CHAMPIONS #1**
The most popular super-hero role-playing characters, now in their own comic!
Story Dennis Mallonee
Art Carol Lay
[$1.25 color Mando comic, ships 5/20]

☐ **NEW DNAGENTS #9**
The startling conclusion of the Venimus saga, and a turning point in the life of Shami!
Story Mark Evanier
Art Scheuer & Blyberg
[95¢ Mendo color comic, ships 5/27]

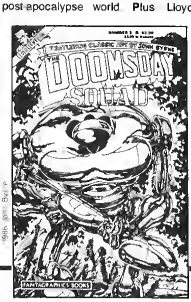
☐ **LASER ERASER AND PRESSBUTTON IN 3-D #1**
"Triple Cross"
A tale of treachery, slavery, and identical triplets.
Story "Pedro Henry"
Art Collins & Fermer
Cover Gerry Leech
[$2.25 3-D comic on white paper, ships 5/27]

☐ **MIRACLEMAN #9**
Miracleman discovers who's been tracking him all these months, and the last piece of his origin falls into place.
Story Alan Moore
Art Chuck Beckum
Cover Frank Miller
[95¢ color Mendo comic, ships 3/25]

☐ **WORLD OF WOOD #2**
More material from the Wood vaults including a Wally Wood pencilled cover inked by Dave Stevens.
Story/Art Wally Wood
[$1.75 color comic on white paper, ships 5/20]

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

☐ **DOOMSDAY SQUAD #2**
The Squad faces more menaces in their post-apocalypse world. Plus: Lloyd



Llewellyn goes to the circus in a new story by Daniel Clowes.
Story Joe Gill
Art/Cover John Byrne
Color Wheatley & Mayer
[$2.00 full-color comic on white paper, ships in May]

☐ **LOVE AND ROCKETS BOOK TWO**
Reprinting the totality of *Love and Rockets* #3 and #4, with a new "Heartbreak Soup" story by Gilbert Hernandez and an expanded version of "100 Rooms" by Jaime Hernandez included.
All by Los Bros Hernandez
[$9.95 black-and-white 160-page graphic album on white paper, ships in May]

☐ **NEMO: The Classic Comics Library #20**
Featuring Alex Raymond, Ralph Briggs Fuller, Jimmy Swinnerton, and more. Edited by Rick Merschall.
Cover Alex Raymond
[$3.50 black-and-white magazine on white paper, ships in May]

FIRST COMICS

☐ **AMERICAN FLAGG! #33**
The KKK and Gotterdammercrats invade Q.USA and Sam uncovers a plot to assassinate Flagg! Plus a Bob Violence story by Steven Grant and Joe Steton.
Story Chaykin & Grant
Art Badger & Emberlin
Cover Mark Badger
[$1.25 Mando color comic, ships 5/16]

☐ **HAWKMOON: JEWEL IN THE SKULL #3**
Continuing the adaptation of Michael Moorcock's book with the battle for the Kamarg.
Story Gerry Conway
Art Rafael Kayanan
[$1.75 full-color comic on white paper, ships 5/23]

☐ **JON SABLE, FREELANCE #40**
Jon Sable's first case, in which he hunts down an infamous criminal and escaped convict.
All by Mike Grell
[$1.75 color comic on white paper, ships 5/23]

LODESTONE COMICS

☐ **CODE NAME: DANGER #5**
"Snow Job"
A take-off on *Miami Vice*, among other things.
Story Robert Loren Fleming
Art Ordway & Gordon
Cover Paul Gulacy
[$1.50 color comic on white paper, ships 5/30]

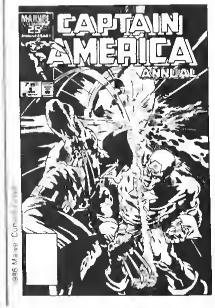
☐ **EVANGELINE #1**
"Dinosaur Farm"
The return of the killer nun, still tracking the Hate Boat pirates.
Story Charles Dixon
Art Hunt & Villagran
[$1.50 color comic on white paper, ships 5/30]

☐ **THE HONEYMOONERS #1**
Featuring two stories—an adaptation of the very first *Honeymooners* episode, and a brand new episode.
Story Robert Loren Fleming
Art Vince Musacchia
[$1.50 color comic on white paper, ships 5/30]

MARVEL COMICS

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT ANNUAL #1**
Gilded Lily's spirit takes over the Alpha Flight mansion.
Story Bill Mantlo
Art Stromen & Teteoc
[$1.25 48-page color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

AVENGERS #271
Paladin guest stars as the Avengers take on the New Yellowjacket, Screaming Mimi and the Grey Gargoyle.
Story Roger Stern
Art J. Busceme & Palmer
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/20, newsstand o/s 6/12]



☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA ANNUAL #8**
Guest-starring Wolverine, Zeck and Beatty return to Cap as he takes on Tess-One.
Story Mark Gruenwald
Art Zeck & Beatty
[$1.25 48-page color comic, ships 5/20, newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **CLASSIC X-MEN #1**
Mando reprints of early New X-Men tales with new bridging material. This reprints the first third of *Giant-Size X-Men #1* plus 20 pages by Claremont and John Bolton detailing the recruitment of the New X-Men.
Story Wein & Claremont
Art Cockrum & Bolton
Cover Art Adams
[$1.00 color comic, ships 5/27]

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #186**
A pirate story featuring "The Crimson Brotherhood."
Story Don Kraar
Art/Cover Docherty & Simons
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/20, newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **THE ETERNALS #12**
The double sized conclusion of the Eternal/Deviant war.
Story Walt Simonson
Art S. Busceme
[$1.25 48-page color comic, ships 5/20, newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #294**
The FF return to Central City to rescue the She-Hulk and search for the Thing.
Story Byrne & Stern
Art Ordway & Gordon
Cover John Byrne
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **G.I. JOE #51**
Focus on Cobra Emperor and more new Joes and new Dreadnoks.
Story Larry Hama
Art Rod Whigham
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/20, newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #323**
Hulk and Banner begin to discorporate, setting the stage for their rejoining.
Story/Art/Cover Al Milgrom
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/20, newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **IRON MAN #210**
The return of Happy Hogan and Pepper Potts.
Story Denny Fingeroth
Art Bright & Akin/Gervey
Cover Akin & Garvey
[75¢ color comic, ships 5/27, newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **MARVEL FANFARE #28**
Alpha Flight story as Northstar becomes reinvolved with his previous terrorist background.
Story Bill Mantlo
Art Ken Steacy
[$1.50 direct-sales comic on white paper, ships 5/20]

☐ **MARVEL SAGA #10**
Origins of the Beast, Marvel Girl, Dr.

WATCHMEN™

"Whatever happened to the American dream? You're looking at it." THE COMEDIAN (1977)

A 12 ISSUE DELUXE SERIES
BY ALAN MOORE AND DAVE GIBBONS

TM & COPYRIGHT © 1986 DC COMICS INC.

COMING COMICS

Strange and the Ancient One. The first battle with Nightmare, plus the debut of the Sandman.
Text ..... **Peter Sanderson**
Cover ..... **Brent Anderson**
[$1.00 color comic; ships 5/20; newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **MARVEL TALES #191**
Reprinting, in a 64 page special, the controversial 3-part story dealing with drug abuse (originally run without the Comics Code seal).
Story ..... **Stan Lee**
Art ..... **Kane & Giacoia**
Cover ..... **Bright & Breeding**
[$1.50 64-page newsstand color comic; ships 5/20; newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP INDEX #5**
Text ..... **George Olshevsky**
[$1.25 color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **PETER PARKER, SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #118**
Concluding the child abuse storyline.
Story ..... **Peter David**
Art ..... **Zeck & McLeod**
Cover ..... **Rich Buckler**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **POWER MAN #125**
Last issue.
Story ..... **Jim Owsley**
Art ..... **Merk Bright**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/20; newsstand o/s 6/12]

☐ **SAVAGE TALES #28**
More blood and guts action in the Rambo vein with stories by **Pepe Moreno, John Severin** and others.
[$1.50 black-and-white magazine; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **SECTAURS #8**
Story ..... **Bill Mantlo**
Art ..... **Geiger & Williams**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **STAR WARS #107**
Everybody is out to get Luke.
Story ..... **Jo Duffy**
Art ..... **Martin & Steacy**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **THOR #371**
Guest stars Justice Peace.
Story/Cover ..... **Walt Simonson**
Art ..... **Sal Buscema**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **TRANSFORMERS #20**
Skid meets Ravage in a Western showdown to the death.
Story ..... **Bob Budiansky**
Art ..... **Herb Trimpe**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **X-FACTOR #8**
Jean Grey looks for her sister.
Story ..... **Louise Simonson**
Art/Cover ..... **Jackson Guice**
[75¢ sales color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **X-MEN #209**
Major battle issue as Rachel seeks refuge in Central Park.
Story ..... **Chris Claremont**
Art ..... **Romita, Jr. & Green**
Cover ..... **John Romita, Jr.**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/20; newsstand o/s 6/12]

MARVEL EPIC COMICS

☐ **ELFQUEST #14**
The elves seek aid from a tribe of humans but have to deal with the tribe's evil shamaness—The Bone Woman.
Story ..... **W. & R. Pini**
Art ..... **Wendy Pini**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **STEELGRIP STARKEY #1**
The long-awaited tale of a man and his powertool.
Story/Pencils ..... **Alan Weiss**
Inks ..... **Jim Sherman**
[$1.50 color comic on white paper; ships 5/27]

MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVELS

☐ **DR. STRANGE GRAPHIC NOVEL**
Dr. Strange returns to the place that created him. The Ancient One has gone, but he has left a gift for Doc—the powers of which are a mystery.
Story ..... **J.M. DeMatteis**
Art ..... **Dan Green**
[$5.95 full color graphic novel; ships 5/27]

MARVEL STAR COMICS

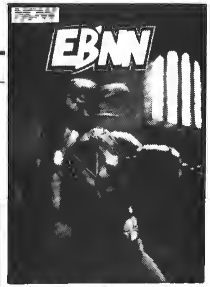
☐ **CARE BEARS #6**
The Care Bears come to the rescue of Jackie Jasper, a poor lil' tyke with a heartbreaking problem (psoriasis?).
Story ..... **Howard Post**
Art ..... **Jon D'Agostino**
Cover ..... **Warren Kremer**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **MADBALLS #1**
First of three part limited series.
Story ..... **Sid Jacobson**
Art ..... **Post & Edelman**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/27; newsstand o/s 6/19]

☐ **MUPPET BABIES #9**
Baby Piggy's greatest dream—to become Cleo-piggy, princess of the Nile—turns into an Egyptian nightmare for all the Muppet Babies.
Story ..... **Stan Kay**
Art ..... **Marie Severin**
[75¢ color comic; ships 5/20; newsstand o/s 6/19]

NOW COMICS

☐ **EB'NN #3**
The dramatic conclusion to "Three Nights".
Story ..... **Michael Dimpsey**
Art ..... **Ecker & Schneider**



1986 Dimpsey & Ecker

Also featuring "Silverwing" in a story by **Mark Nelson**
Cover ..... **Tom Doney**
[$1.50 40 page black and white direct sales comic; ships May 31]

☐ **RALPH SNART ADVENTURES #1**
The adventures of a mild-mannered accountant turned lunatic.
Story/Art ..... **Marc Hansen**
[$1.00 black and white direct-sales comic; ships May 31]

ONWARD COMICS

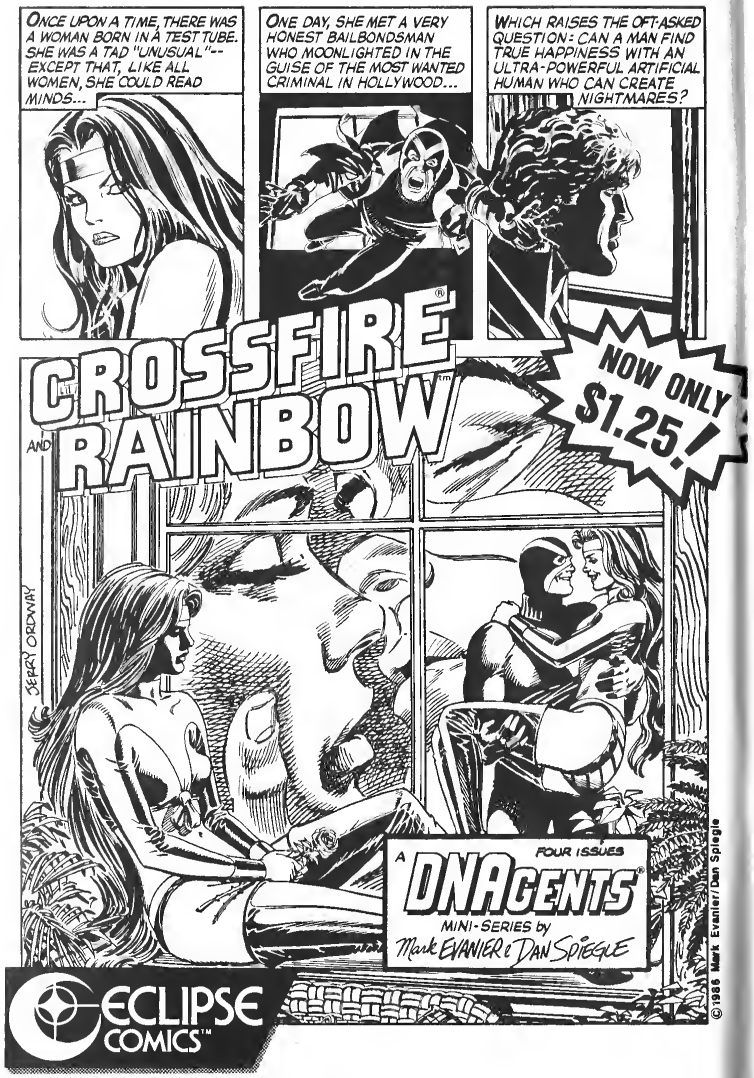
1986 Jeff Nicholson

☐ **ULTRA KLUTZ #1**
Introducing a new comic book hero.
Story/Art ..... **Jeff Nicholson**
[$1.50 black and white direct sales comic; ships in May]

RENEGADE PRESS

☐ **MS. TREE #30**
Story ..... **Max Allan Collins**
Art/Cover ..... **Terry Beatty**
[$1.70 black-and-white direct-sales comic; ships 5/26]

☐ **SILENT INVASION #2**
Story ..... **Michael Cherkas**
Art ..... **Larry Hancock**
[$1.70 direct-sales black-and-white comic; ships 5/26]



QUEST FOR ADVENTURE

By Jim Korkis

"Jonny Quest's real stars are William Hanna and Joseph Barbera who since going into business seven years ago have brought us the Flintstones, Huckleberry Hound, the Jetsons, Quick Draw McGraw, the incomparable Yogi Bear and a host of other unforgettable TV cartoon characters. This time it's towheaded Jonny Quest, who roams the seven seas from the Sargasso to the Antarctic in search of high adventure. He finds it, too." So stated the Fall Preview edition of *TV Guide* for the 1964-1965 television season.

Actually, *Jonny Quest* had debuted a week before the regular season. On Friday, September 18, 1964 on ABC, *Jonny Quest* premiered with an episode entitled "Mystery of the Lizard-men" which was later adapted into the one and only *Jonny Quest* comic book published shortly thereafter by Gold Key.

The 1964-65 television season also saw the debut of such fan favorite shows as *Gilligan's Island*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, *The Munsters*, *Bewitched*, *The Addams Family*, and *Gomer Pyle USMC*. Surprisingly, *Jonny Quest* was not the only prime time cartoon series that made its premiere during that season. *The Famous Adventures of Mr. Magoo* started running on NBC Saturday night opposite *Gilligan's Island*.

In today's world of cut-throat network ratings, it is difficult to imagine a network gambling on a cartoon series to attract sufficient viewers. However, *Jonny Quest* was actually the fourth prime time cartoon series. *The Flintstones*, *The Jetsons* and *Top Cat*, which were all produced by Hanna-Barbera, had convinced ABC that a cartoon series could attract both young and old viewers in an early night time slot.

Today, some animation fans hold the name Hanna-Barbera in disdain. Hanna-Barbera was one of the first studios to start farming out animation to cheaper foreign studios thereby cutting back on possible employment for local animators and in the process generating some ill-will in the animation community. Because Hanna-Barbera has produced more television animation than all the other studios combined, it is a highly visible target and has come to represent in some people's minds the very worst in limited animation.

It was not always the case. Thirty years ago, flattering articles appeared lauding Mr. Hanna and Mr. Barbera as "Mr. Tom and Mr. Jerry" (in recognition for their outstanding work on the "Tom and Jerry" series of theatrical cartoons). When they later entered television, they were still showered with awards and magazines still published articles seriously praising the work of these two gentlemen.

Neither Hanna nor Barbera began their career as cartoonists. Joseph Barbera is a former New Yorker who once aspired to be a boxer but ended up becoming a Wall Street bank teller for New York's Irving Trust Company. He sketched and doodled in his spare time and eventually started to submit gag drawings to leading magazines and managed to sell one to *Collier's*. After he was laid off in a personnel cutback, he joined an animation company, Van Buren Associates, as a sketch artist. In June 1937 he moved out to Hollywood and joined the animation department at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. He was hired within weeks of William Hanna being hired by the same company.

A I an on pp 17-47 1986 Hanna-Barbera unless otherwise indicated

Photo courtesy HANNA-BARBERA

Joseph Barbera (left) and William Hanna (right) amongst many of their creations

William Hanna spent his school years studying engineering and journalism. After college, he joined a firm in California as a structural engineer, but found himself unemployed during the Depression. He turned to cartooning and went to work for Leon Schlesinger where his duties were "to run for coffee, to wipe cels, to sweep up and to drown the bosses with story ideas." In 1937, he was hired by MGM as a director and story man in the cartoon department.

In 1938, MGM teamed the two men together to produce a single, six-minute animated short. Originally, Hanna and Barbera had considered using a fox and a hound since teaming those animals would create a natural conflict and generate quite a few story ideas. Eventually, they decided on a cat and mouse and so Tom and Jerry were born in rough form in a cartoon entitled "Puss gets The Boot." That first Tom and Jerry short captured the public fancy and ran for six weeks in Los Angeles at its first theater billing. That single cartoon spawned an entire series of cartoons and over a decade later, Hanna and Barbera had produced over a hundred Tom and Jerrys.

By the mid-50, with dwindling revenues (thanks in part to the advent of television) and movie theaters closing, movie studios closed their animation units and phased out theatrical shorts. Technically, Hanna and Barbera were under long term contract with MGM so even though they had to dismiss their entire staff, they could have remained with the studio until their contracts expired. Early in 1957, they asked to be released from their contracts and formed their own company.

In 1961, Hanna recalled, "We had a name on paper and nothing else. The movie cartoon business was obviously dead. The only alternative was television. But everyone we talked to told us we were out of our minds. No one could afford good animation on TV."

In desperation, the team created a process they called "Planned Animation." They tried to develop as many shortcuts as possible. When a character spoke, only his mouth moved. When he walked, only his legs moved. Working with former Warner Bros storymen like Michael Maltese and Warren Foster, they tried to create stories which would emphasize character and dialogue and eliminate all unnecessary movement. The result was a seven minute cartoon that only needed 2,000 drawings. (In comparison, the average theatrical Tom and Jerry cartoon from around this same period required 14,000 drawings for a seven minute cartoon.)

However, it took many months before Hanna and Barbera could convince anyone that "planned animation" would work. Eventually Screen Gems (Columbia Pictures television subsidiary) took a chance and spent $10,000 to see some sample cartoons about a dim-witted dog named Ruff and his intelligent cat companion Reddy. Screen Gems sold the samples to NBC as a series and Hanna-Barbera were on their way to success in television animation. Ruff and Reddy were dropped into a television world where the only other cartoons were old black and white theatrical cartoons which often lacked the pacing to hold the attention of a child. Saturday morning had not yet become an animation battlefield and cartoon shows required a live host to "bridge" the time between cartoons. Ruff and Reddy are fondly remembered by animation fans but it was only a "rough and ready" product produced to show that "planned animation" could be cost effective.

Hanna-Barbera developed another half hour all-cartoon series entitled *The Huckleberry Hound Show* and it is generally considered to be a turning point in TV animation because it was the first cartoon show to consist entirely of animation without a live host to introduce the cartoons. It became an immediate success, even winning an Emmy in 1960 for "outstanding achievement in the field of children's programming." The success of the show was so amazing that minor characters who appeared on the show were quickly spun-off into their own series and H-B found themselves also animating *The Quick Draw McGraw Show* and *The Yogi Bear Show*.

Hanna-Barbera were adored and everyone (except for some "animation dinosaurs" who were shocked by this limited animation) loved their cartoons. They received recognition and as an added bonus, merchandising on the characters brought in much needed capital. Soon sponsors began asking if Hanna-Barbera had any ideas for a series for prime-time viewing.

In 1960, *The Flintstones* appeared in prime time. Costing $65,000 per half hour it was then one of the most expensive half hours on television. The success of this prehistoric version of *The Honeymooners* was without precedent and suddenly even more sponsors appeared wanting more cartoons.

By the end of 1961, Hanna-Barbera was turning out over 4,500 minutes of new animated film a year. (By comparison, Disney's *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*, released around the same time, took three years to produce approximately 80 minutes of animation.)

Critics suggested that the partners may have taken on more work than they could handle and were resorting to even greater shortcuts that only a television audience would tolerate. Hanna and Barbera responded by quoting Buffalo Bob Smith, creator of Howdy Doody. "Hanna and Barbera are creating children's visual shows and adult audio shows. Turn off the sound and children will enjoy what they see. Turn off the picture, and adults will enjoy what they hear," stated Smith.

"Our dialogue," Barbera reaffirmed, "explains why even our animal cartoons have a 40 per cent adult audience." Hanna and Barbera both took considerable pride in the fact that adults watched their shows.

However, their string of successes suffered when the next two prime time cartoons they produced, *Top Cat* and *The Jetsons*, failed to meet with the phenomenal success of the Flintstones and soon disappeared from prime time. Their new syndicated series featuring characters like Touche Turtle stopped looking new and different and seemed to be settling into a comfortable formula.

It was during this time that Jonny Quest was born. John Mitchell, Screen Gems vice-president, had already told the team that "they couldn't expect to do animal stories forever. Why not try a cartoon about people?"

According to a press release prior to the debut of *Jonny Quest*, the show was "the product of over two years of research by Hanna-Barbera artists." Some concept drawings had been shown to Hanna and Barbera and they were excited about developing a show with more realistic characters since it would give them a chance to make a radical departure from the funny animal cartoons that were being labelled kiddie fare by many. At the time, they pointed out that they were inspired by the memories of the old time radio adventure shows and comic strip adventure series.

In that same press release, it went on to emphasize that "on radio, the mind's eye took over and the listener's imagination was stimulated and transported to the four corners of the world. Today, on television, the scope and geography of stories is limited. It is financially impossible to take cameras all over the world to recreate locales. However, via the pen and ink magic of Hanna-Barbera artists, viewers will join Jonny Quest as he travels to the North Pole, Tibet, the Sargasso Sea area, India and wherever else their adventures lead them."

In 1964, the creation of a cartoon series that was realistic was an unbelievable undertaking. The closest thing to realistic animation for tv that had been done previously were series like Cambria's *Clutch Cargo*, which had more or less single drawings combined with Synchro-Vox, a process where actual human lips reading the lines were superimposed on the two-dimensional drawings. Realistic animation was considered "unrealistic" from a financial standpoint because more drawings

would be required and greater attention would have to be paid to the artwork to make sure the anatomy was correct, the movements smooth and the backgrounds elaborate. Few animators had training in producing that kind of animation work.

Doug Wildey, in his first animation job, was in charge of the *Johnny Quest* project. Wildey was well known for his freelance work in comic books like *The Outlaw Kid* and had worked on *The Saint* newspaper strip until it folded in 1962. Wildey's realistic approach to artwork was well known, but he was somewhat unprepared for trying to set those same standards for a TV animation show.

In a 1973 interview, Wildey said, "It's a matter of educating network people that this stuff doesn't come cheap and there aren't too many animators around to do the realistic movements. We had a lot of trouble with that in the beginning of *Jonny Quest* because the motions were too speeded up; the boats were moving too fast and the people opened doors with speed lines. That type of thing. We couldn't have that. We had to have realistic motion to a degree to make the thing work in the story. Otherwise the audience wouldn't buy it."

More and more effort was funnelled into the project. Hanna and Barbera wanted to achieve a balance between "documentary reality and creative adventure." Joe Barbera mentioned that it was his intent that "there will be no mad scientists running around ready to blow up the Earth with a secret bomb; no monsters from other planets. Nothing out of the realm of the believable will happen to the Quests."

Supposedly, artists and writers were busy delving into books in order to create original "but accurate" costumes and inventions. "Not only is there no challenge to copying an airplane already in use, but kids are sharp these days and when a plane has been junked, they know it. And since we base our series on up-to-the-second stories, we design our own plane, based on the actual aircraft but with a more futurisic look. This keeps us one step ahead of our astute audience and makes the Quest series even more believable," claimed William Hanna.

Under the guidance of Doug Wildey, the show took shape. The cast of characters seemed to be inspired by old adventure comic strips.

Jonny Quest, the eleven year old son of Dr. Quest, was voiced by Tim Matheson, who later grew up to be "Otter" in *Animal House*. Jonny was a blond haired All-American boy who travelled with his father at all times and exhibited intelligence and resourcefulness with such ease that it may be suspected his early reading was the adventures of the Hardy Boys.

Dr. Benton Quest was the red-bearded father of Jonny and his voice was supplied first by John Stephenson and later by Don Messick. Dr. Quest was considered "one of the three top scientists in the world." No mention was ever made of Jonny's mother but fans always suspected she was the victim of foul play which is why Jonny and his father needed a bodyguard.

Roger "Race" Bannon was voiced by Mike Road (sometimes spelled Rhode on publicity material). "Because of the nature of Dr. Quest's work and his importance to the scientific world and mankind in general, Roger 'Race' Bannon has been assigned by Intelligence I as a permanent bodyguard for the Quests as well as a tutor and friend to Jonny."

The relationship between the athletic, self-assured Race and the eager Jonny resembled a similar one between Terry and Pat Ryan in Milton Caniff's *Terry and the Pirates*. At times, Race seemed more of a father than Dr. Quest who was almost constantly absorbed in his important work on Palm Key Island.

Hadji (also spelled "Haji" in some publicity matehall) was a mysterious boy from India who was voiced by Danny Bravo. Publicity material claims that he was adopted by the Quests although no mention of this fact was made in the series. While most fans remember Hadji as a regular on the series, he failed to appear in the premiere episode "The Mystery of the Lizazrdmen" and was also absent from "Skull and Double-Cross Bones."

Bandit was Jonny's bulldog and usually provided the comic relief in the episodes. Bandit's voice was by Don Messick, who years later would create the voice for Scooby-Doo.

There were two supporting characters who are also of interest. Jezebel Jade (voiced by Cathy Lewis) appears in two episodes, "Double Danger" and "Terror Island." She had obviously been romantically involved with Race Bannon (a fact that helps her discover Race's impostor) and seems to stray on the wrong side of the law.

Dr. Zin (voiced by Vic Perrin) appeared in four episodes, "Riddle of the Gold," "Robot Spy," "Double Danger" and "Fraudulent Volcano." He was an evil Oriental mastermind who was in charge of a large network of criminals.

Around these characters revolved fantastic stories about gargoyles, dragons, invisible monsters, as well as the usual band of foreign spies and forgotten Nazi war criminals. It was exactly like an old boys adventure book series come to life with the pulpish stories and exotic locales giving the series a timeless appeal.

In 1964, there was no Action for Children's Television to claim that children's shows were too violent but Hanna and Barbera were sensitive to the fact that despite making the show exciting enough for adults, they had to consider their younger audience and Hanna and Barbera assured concerned parents that villains would be disposed of in an imaginative, clever way rather than with violent methods. "It's easy to whip out a gun and shoot a villain," claimed Joe Barbera, "It's much more difficult and challenging to find unique escape methods. Some of our tricks will remind the adults in our audience of the old Doug Fairbanks Sr. methods, which always had a touch of humor about them. We are doing the same type of creative thinking in the Quest series. For example, in one episode, we have Hadji do the Indian rope trick in order to free 'Race' who is

held captive in a room that couldn't be reached any other way. We even have him slide back down the rope. An audience will accept a certain amount of 'poetic license' just for the thrill of it. But we never go too far." (Barbera didn't mention that the creative methods of disposing of villains included stalactites crushing them,

hidden mines blowing them up in the swamp, and Abominable Snowmen wiping out the bad guys.)

When the show finally appeared on TV in September of 1964, it didn't live up to Hanna-Barbera's high expectations. Perhaps the show appeared during the wrong season. Even though it drew favorable comments, it was not the huge success necessary to sustain the increased budget and extra time needed to animate. Unlike *The Flintstones*, it didn't garner the public adoration that would have singled it out as a "must-see" program. Fans of adventure had the brand new *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* and *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* to capture their imagination. In a world just beginning to discover the magic of James Bond and his gadgets, the perils of a traditional globe-trotting family seemed quaint and was simply lost in the flood of Bondian imitations.

The strongest critic of the show was Doug Wildey. In 1973, he commented, "It was well reviewed throughout the country. Newspapers, *Time* magazine—everybody gave it good reviews. I personally didn't. It didn't work for me the way I had pictured it but then I was new to the cartoon business. It was kind of a shock to see something not work the way I had thought it should. But as I look back now, I will still see an occasional *Jonny Quest* sequence on television that beats the hell out of anything that I have worked on or seen in the last eight years. I haven't seen anything on television that has come up to *Jonny Quest*'s standards. As I look back, it was obviously a better done show than anything that's around now so I guess you could square that one for us."

Unfortunately, the lack of overwhelming success that was expected of *Jonny Quest* probably helped bring about the end of prime time cartoon programming as well as de-

terring Hanna-Barbera from developing further realistic animation shows. If *Jonny Quest* had been the innovative success that it was expected to be, perhaps the entire future of TV animation would have changed with more and more shows risking the extra effort and expense to provide realistic adventures rather than the glut of unfunny animals that filled the airwaves. The recent success of shows like *Robotech*, *G.I. Joe* and *Thundercats* shows that a market does exist for this style of animated adventure.

Jonny Quest has proven to be a durable series. After it finished its first run on ABC in 1965, it was later run on CBS from 1967-1970 and then re-run on ABC from 1970-1972. It was later used on NBC, starting first in 1978 as part of the *Godzilla Power Hour* and then shown for another two years on its own. It was the only animated series to appear on all three networks.

Even during the span from 1972-1978 when the show was not on the air, interest was still high. Material featuring Jonny and his friends still appeared. Modern Promotions released an original Giant Durabook story about Jonny Quest and "The Adventure with the Salt Plot" by Horace J. Elias. In the story, Jonny and Hadji are able to defeat the plans of Dr. Mephisto Chang and Hugo Xippe who had a chemical that was "so powerful that just a few ounces of it will make any body of water so salty it will take years to make it drinkable again."

Cornell Kimball published four issues of a *Jonny Quest* fanzine and each issue urged readers to write to the networks to get them to rerun the episodes. The small fanzine featured original stories about the characters, some original artwork and some general factual information.

For over two decades, *The Adventures of Jonny Quest* has continued to entertain and to inspire dreams of wonder. Like another Hanna-Barbera series that has recently been rediscovered, *The Jetsons*, *Jonny Quest* will soon be revived, proving that Hanna-Barbera's original investment in quality and experimentation was well worthwhile. There is no doubt that *Jonny Quest* will continue to inspire lovers of pulpish adventure at least another two decades.

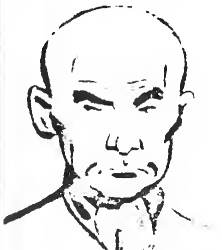
From September 18, 1964 to December 1964, *The Adventures of Jonny Quest* appeared on ABC-TV Friday nights at 7:30 p.m. In December of 1964 until the first season (including reruns) ended September 1965, the show appeared on Thursday nights at 7:30 p.m. William Hanna and Joseph Barbera were listed as directors of the series. The following listing is the original order in which the 26 episodes appeared.

Jim Korkis would like to extend his

thanks to Sarah Baisley and Mark Hoffmeier of TECO (Taft Entertainment Company) who provided invaluable assistance in compiling this information.

1. Mystery of the Lizardmen

After five ships disappear in the Sargasso Sea, Dr. Quest is called in



to the investigation. Quest finds that laser, atomic radiation focused in a narrow beam of light, is being used as a destructive weapon. Quest, Jonny, Race and Bandit leave immediately for the area. After many days of fruitless search, Jonny, Race and Bandit board an old ship. They are taken prisoner by the Chief and his men whose frogmen outfits suggest the appearance of a lizard. The Chief tells Race and Jonny that he has developed the laser gun into the ultimate weapon and has blasted the missing ships with it. Listening to the Chief, Jonny realizes the Chief plans to use the laser gun to blast the first Man to the Moons hot, scheduled for that very day. Jonny, Race and Bandit escape their captors. After Dr. Quest defeats the Chief and his men, the moon shot is successful.

2. Arctic Splash Down

Enemy agents succeed in deflecting a guided missile which lands in the Antarctic. Dr. Quest is assigned to investigate the missile's strange disappearance. Covered by an aerial umbrella, Quest, Race, Jonny, Hadji and Bandit set out for the Antarctic. The Captain orders his men to destroy the Quest expedition and gain possession of the missile. Quest and Race find that the enemy has grounded the missile to learn the secret of Quest's newest directional system. The Captain and his men capture Dr. Quest and Race. Before being taken away, Quest activates the destructive mechanism in the missile. The party manages to escape. The enemy agents are foiled when the missile blows up. Quest determines to build an improved directional brain.

3. The Curse of Anubis

Ahmed, an unscrupulous chieftain, plots to unite the warring factions of his country and become the leader of the new nation. Captaliz-

ing on Dr. Quest's interest in archaeology, Ahmed gets him to come to Egypt with Race, Jonny, Hadji and Bandit. Ahmed has defied the gods of his people by stealing the statue of Anubis and taking it to the ruins of Ghiva. Officials start an intensive investigation when the theft is discovered. In the interest of archaeological research, Ahmed gets Quest and his party to go to the ruins of Ghiva. Ahmed traps Quest and Race in a catacomb of the ancient ruins. He tells them that when they are found, dead or alive, the fact that foreigners have plotted to steal an ancient treasure will unite all his people and he will be the leader. However, Jonny and Hadji elude Ahmed's tribesmen. With the air supply in the catacomb diminishing rapidly, Quest and Race realize they have but a short time to live. Jonny and Hadji find a secret passage to Quest and Race. They are freed and Ahmed's plot is foiled.

4. Pursuit of the Po-Ho

Drena Harman radios Dr. Quest to help her when husband Emil is captured by the Po-Ho natives. With Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit, Quest flies to rescue his friend and fellow scientist. Flying over the jungle, Dr. Quest uses an amplifier to tell the natives that he is a new god. Drena tells Dr. Quest that she has learned from the sounds of the drums that Emil is to be offered as a sacrifice to the god Rahneo. Before he is able to help Emil, Dr. Quest himself is captured by the Po-Hos. Drena tells Jonny and Race that the drums are announcing that Quest will also be sacrificed. Race stains himself with the juice of purple berries. Posing as a native god, Race scares the natives and rescues Dr. Quest and Emil. Later, however, Race learns that it will take at least three weeks for the berry juice to wear off.

5. Riddle of the Gold

Cassim captures Professor Gunderson, the inventor of a process to create gold. The Maharajah tells Dr. Zin that having possession of Gundersen's secret will make them the richest, most powerful men in the world. Cassim kills the Maharajah. Dr. Quest is called into the case since he is the only man beside Gundersen who knows the secret of the gold's creation. It is arranged that Quest and his party fly to India. Two attempts on their lives fail. However, Cassim meets them in the guise of the late Maharajah. Plans are made to kill Quest and Race during a tiger hunt. When the party has gone off, Jonny, Hadji and Bandit go exploring on their own. They find Professor Gundersen in a mine. The Professor warns them that Quest is in danger. Cassim plans to trap all of them in the mine and then kill Dr. Quest. Bandit's quick action saves them. Cassim is killed by a leopard. Zin escapes warning Dr. Quest they will meet again.

6. Treasure of the Temple

Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit accompany Dr. Quest when he leaves for the ancient Mayan city of Malatan. Perkins, his aide, Montoya and their men have been searching the ruins for a lost treasure, employs every means to drive him away. Perkins and Montoya tie up a native who has refused to obey their orders and leave him for the vultures. Jonny finds the native. Dr. Quest and Race release him. The native runs off. Then Jonny and Hadji find the treasure room. Perkins has been seeking Perkins and his men overpower the members of Dr. Quest's party and imprison them in a room with walls ten feet thick. A secret door in the wall opens and the native whom they had rescued appears. He leads them to an underground river. After evading many traps set by Perkins, Dr. Quest and his party paddle into an underground cave whose roof is covered with stalactites. When Perkins and his men paddle into the cave, Race shoots at the roof. The pursuing party is crushed by falling stalactites.

7. Calcutta Adventure

Dr. Quest is working on ultra high frequency sonic waves, which used destructively, could demolish a city. He is asked to investigate a mysterious ailment which has stricken sheepherders in the Indian mountains. There, Quest, Race and Jonny meet Hadji, a young Indian boy and his friend Pasha. Pasha flies the party to a mountain in his native flying machine. Inside the mountain is a laboratory where Kronick and his technicians are perfecting a nerve gas which will enable them to conquer all their enemies. Quest is captured inside the mountain. Race arrives as Kronick prepares to torture Quest to learn how he gained access to the secret laboratory. When Pasha's flying machine fails, Quest uses his sonic amplifier to help his party escape. Hadji bids farewell to Pasha as he joins Dr. Quest, Race and Jonny.

8. Dr. Zin's Robot Spy

Dr. Quest schedules a test for his new para-power ray gun. If successful, the gun will drain the power from any object, disarm an army or air force, without destroying human life. Dr. Zin wants possession of the secret. Before the test, a mysterious light, emanating from a strange object is seen on the island. Dr. Quest sends Race to get a sand truck and winch. Jonny, his friend Hadji and Bandit hitch a ride with Race. The object is taken to the storage building just as Dr. Zin planned, since it is a robot spy which memorizes secrets. From afar, Dr. Zin directs the object in its search for the para-gun. Finding the gun, the robot memorizes all the details of its construction. Every weapon, from tanks to flame throwers, employed by Dr. Quest fails to destroy the robot. Dr. Quest realizes he must use his para-power ray gun to destroy the robot. Dr. Zin's voice tells Dr. Quest they will meet once again, and Dr. Quest lets him know that he will be ready for him.

9. Double Danger

In Thailand, Dr. Quest is searching for a vine that will answer one of the problems facing future space expeditions. This vine will act as a giant tranquillizer to preserve the sanity of space ship crews locked in their metal prisons for stretches as long as sixteen years. Dr. Zin plots to get control of the vine which will enable him to reduce the inhabitants of a major city to a flock of sheep awaiting destruction. Dr. Zin trains Korchek, a double for Race, for the job. Race is trapped and captured by Suthep and Korchek substitutes for him. Moreover, when Kogo, the monkey, reacts in a strange way to Korchek, both Jonny and Hadji become suspicious. When Jade arrives, she talks with Korchek and also feels something is wrong. Although Dr. Quest is captured by Korchek, Jade helps Race to escape. Dr. Zin's insidious plot is defeated and the secret of the precious vine is saved for future experimentation in space flight.

10. Shadow of the Condor

Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit fly with Dr. Quest to the Andes where he is to install a new type air filter he has invented in the silver mines. Facing disaster when the plane's oil line springs a leak, they sight a landing strip in the heart of the Andes. Race negotiates the landing. They are met by Baron Heinrich von Froelich. The Baron, a famous flyer in World War I, has a collection of planes from that war. The Baron tells Jonny that his servant Julio is a mute. The following morning, Race finds someone has tinkered with his plane and that he must fly to get a new relief valve. The Baron offers Race the use of his old "Spad." Julio, not really a mute, tries to warn Dr. Quest that the Baron plans to follow Race in another World War I plane and engage him in combat. Dr. Quest feels Race will have more than a chance until Julio tells him that the Baron's guns will be loaded, while Race's are not. In the ensuing air duel, it looks as though Race is doomed, until a giant condor comes to his aid and he defeats the Baron. Julio refuses Dr. Quest's offer to go along when Dr. Quest and his party leave.

11. Skull and Double-Crossbones

Dr. Quest is using his mini-sub to learn how ocean creatures adjust to tremendous pressures. He hopes that his discovery will help in the development of new deep-sea diving techniques. While swimming, Jonny finds a Spanish doubloon. Jose, the cook, immediately radios his chief that the Spanish treasure they have been searching for has been found. The chief and his men arrive and overpower Dr. Quest and the members of his expedition. Threatening Dr. Quest's life, the chief forces Jonny to dive for the treasure. Dr. Quest and Race realize they will probably be killed after the treasure is found. All attempts to escape fail. Then one of the chief's guards throws Bandit overboard. Jonny commands Bandit to swim to Police Superintendent Owens. The police arrive and sink the chief's boat, carrying the treasure, when he tries to escape. Later, Jonny goes swimming. Dr. Quest tells him not to bring anything back, no matter what he finds.

12. Dreadful Doll

Alvero, foreman for Phillipe Lor, a planter, tells Dr. Quest that Lor's daughter, Denise, is a victim of voodoo. Lor tells Quest that Korbay is using voodoo to scare the planters off the island. Quest finds Denise has been drugged. He prepares an antidote. He feels the drug was administered by a tiny blowgun dart. Race, who has been investigating the matter, is captured by Harden, Korbay's employer. Harden, who has been paid a huge sum to construct a secret submarine base, wants to drive everyone from the island so they will not interfere with the project. When Race doesn't return, Jonny and Hadji decide to search for him. Harden leaves Race a prisoner in Korbay's keeping and captures Dr. Quest. Jonny and Hadji help Race escape. After using a blowgun to knock Korbay unconscious, Race and Jonny get control of Harden's submarine. They rescue Dr. Quest from Harden. Harden and Korbay are turned over to the local authorities and the islanders return to their plantations.

13. A Small Matter of Pygmies

The plane in which Race, Jonny, Hadji and Bandit are flying to Dr. Quest's laboratory, develops engine trouble and they are forced to land in the jungle. They rescue Eka, a pygmy, from a panther. After Eka runs off, they are captured by pygmies. Finding a safe spot on a hill, they roll boulders down to keep the pygmies off. However, they are surrounded, and Race feels they'll be in real trouble if the pygmies rush them from both sides. Suddenly the pygmies disappear. Race spots helicopters overhead. Dr. Quest lands with a rescue party. Race gives Dr. Quest a letter he thinks is important. Upon opening the letter, Dr. Quest finds it is an invitation from a geographical society to participate in a round table discussion on the subject "Are Pygmies Warm and Friendly People?"

14. The Dragons of Ashida

Dr. Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit arrive at a small island to visit Dr. Ashida, a zoologist. Ashida has developed a small lizard into a large reptile resembling a dragon. Dr. Quest refuses Ashida's invitation to watch the reptiles fight. Ashida has been working out with Sumi, an undefeated champ in judo. Ashida challenges Race to a match and is beaten. Quest and Race, realizing that Ashida is insane, try to escape. The party is surrounded by the giant reptiles. Ashida tells Quest he will allow the party to leave if Race can beat Sumi in a match. Although Race beats Sumi, Ashida reneges and refuses to allow them to leave. Race acts as decoy and the party escapes past the reptiles. Ashida tries to throw Sumi to the reptiles because he failed to halt the escape. Dr. Quest and his party reach their boat, unaware that Sumi has turned on Ashida and thrown him to the reptiles.

15. Turu the Terrible

Jonny, Race and Hadji and Bandit join Dr. Quest in a search for trinaux-

ite, a metal essential to the space program. Two native brothers give Quest a sample, which comes from the Land of Turu, far up the river. Later, they rescue one of the natives from Turu. From the native's description, Quest realizes that the turu must be a pteranodon, which hasn't been seen in a million years. Quest and his party sail up the river. They beat off an attack by enormous crocodiles and later ward off the turu. Turu is owned by Deen, who uses the ferocious bird to keep natives who are mining trinauxite in line. Quest and Race reach a high plateau, where they find samples of the ore. Once more, the turu attacks them. Using bazookas, they finally wound the bird mortally and he falls into a tar pit. Deen falls in while trying to save him. Dr Quest frees the natives after thanking them for leading his party to the valuable trinauxite.

16. The Fraudulent Volcano

Dr Quest snuffs out an oil well fire with his new fire bomb. The governor of the island of Bahiti asks Quest to use the bomb on volcanic Mount Tahawa, which has been erupting. Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit fly to Bahiti. Dr Zin has been causing the volcano to erupt in a series of tests which will give him control of a new destructive force. He does everything possible to stop Quest from interfering with his plans: after an attack on Quest's life fails, Quest and Race fly over the volcano, leaving Jonny and his friends behind. Using an invisible ray, Zin destroys Quest's plane and captures Quest and Race. After seeing the plane fall, Jonny, Sergeant, an island officer, and Hadji drive to the mountain. Despite all attempts to stop them, they get inside the mountain in their car and escape with Quest and Race. Flying platforms are used by Dr Zin to destroy the party but they escape and learn all the criminals have been captured. Although the governor tells him that he has ordered the destruction of all of Dr Zin's installations, Quest is sure they will meet again.

17. The Werewolf of the Timberland

Dr Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit trek to the Canadian woods to find a specimen of petrified wood. There, the "Boss" is smuggling gold concealed in timber. Blackie and Pierre work for the "Boss." Pierre, disguised as a werewolf, scares off intruders from the area. Pierre warns Quest to leave. Quest and Race go off in search of the petrified wood. Jonny, Hadji and Bandit remain in camp. When Bandit is scared by a skunk, Jonny and Hadji go after him. They discover the gold smuggling operation. Captured, they are tied up in an old sawmill. White Feather, disguised as a wolf, rescues them.

Pierre, in his werewolf disguise, is ordered to attack Race and Dr Quest. White Feather fights Pierre off. Jonny saves white Feather's life when Race, who thinks he is the werewolf, is about to shoot White Feather. Dr Quest tells Jonny that the Mounties are pursuing the criminals. When Bandit returns, after having tangled with a skunk, Dr Quest tells Jonny it is his job to bathe his dog in the river.

18. Pirates From Below

Dr Quest is testing his underwater prober, a new type of submarine. International criminals make plans to get possession of the prober. Svedri captures Race and Jonny who are in the prober. By threatening Jonny, Svedri makes Race comply with his demands. Quest and Hadji discover that the underwater prober has disappeared. Hadji contacts Jonny on his portable communicator. Jonny is able to give him the location of the prober. Race is forced to give him the location of the prober. Race is forced by Valnir to steer the prober towards the criminals' underwater base. Jonny and Race escape from their captors. Enemy underwater craft close in on all sides. Jonny and Race are recaptured. Their captors demand to know where Dr Quest is. When they threaten to shoot Race, Jonny tells them. The underwater pirates finally capture Quest and the prober. Hadji using his Indian magic hypnotizes the guard. Successfully warding off all attacks, and setting off an explosion which destroys their enemies' assault weapons, Quest and his party escape.

19. Attack of the Tree People

When their boat goes on fire, Dr Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit are forced to swim to safety. Quest and Race are separated from the boys and their dog. They are picked up by a Dutch captain, who cruises the area searching for the boys. Jonny, Hadji and Bandit reach shore and, leaving a marker, start for the interior of the island, whose trees are filled with friendly apes. On the island, Silky and Chopper, ex-gunrunners, hear a broadcast offering a reward for the boys. Silky feels if they can find them, they can hold the boys for a much larger ransom. Quest sights the marker and goes ashore with Race. Silky and Chopper capture the boys and take them to a cave. Then they overpower Quest and Race. Quest is forced to radio for ransom money. The apes overpower Chopper and free the boys. Led by Jonny and Hadji, the apes capture Silky and free Quest and Race. Chopper and Silky are turned over to the authorities and the boys bid farewell to the apes.

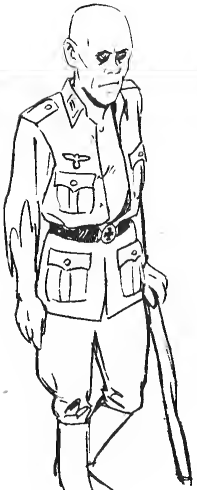
20. The Invisible Monster

Dr Quest's friend, Isaiah Norman, has been experimenting with molecular energy on Cavern Island. Quest receives a frantic radio message from Norman asking his help. He tells Quest he has created something too terrible to contemplate. Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit fly to Cavern Island. Norman is missing, but Quest finds his diary. Buildings and fences seem to have been destroyed by a monster. Race, Jonny and Hadji scouting ahead find huge footprints and discover that the creature is invisible. Reading Norman's diary, Quest learns that Norman made a mass of energy that somehow came alive. It appears that it consumed Norman and everything about it. Quest drops paint bombs on the invisible monster and sees that it is about twenty feet tall. Quest lures the monster into a cave and reverses the process by which it was created. Then the party leaves for home.

21. The Devil's Tower

In Africa, Dr Quest's balloon, carrying his instrument pack, breaks loose and lodges on a mile-high mountain. Race rents an old prop plane and flies to the top of the mountain with Dr Quest. Race then flies to the camp for Jonny, Hadji and Bandit. They find the plateau is inhabited by aborigines, one of whom, Naketu, speaks German. The party is captured by Von Duffle, who tells them he is a German officer. Quest recognizes him as an escaped Nazi war criminal. Von Duffel abandons them on the plateau while he takes off in their plane with a fortune in diamonds the natives have been mining for him. Dr Quest discovers a passage down through the center of the mountain and the party escapes. When they reach the open, Von Duffle buzzes them, planning to blow them up with grenades, the old plane crashes and Dr Quest and his party reach safety.

22. The Quetong Missile Mystery



Dr Quest is asked to investigate the Quetong swamp lake area where many people have become ill later after eating fish from the lake. General Fong has secretly begun preparing to fire a missile from the area. Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit accompany Quest on his investigation. An attempt by Fong's men to dynamite the party fails. Quest discovers that the fish have been poisoned by missile fuel to keep everyone out of the swamp lake area. Police Lieutenant Sing, who is in Fong's employ, kidnaps the boys. Quest and Race follow him into the swamp where Sing's car crashes. Quest and Race drug the sentries with anestha-darts. At the main blockhouse, they knock out everyone but General Fong by putting gas into the air conditioning system. Quest and Race escape with the boys. Fong gives orders to intercept them. Quest and his party sail past mines which detonate too late, but Fong himself is blown up. Quest and his party reach safety.

23. The House of Seven Gargoyles

Dr Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit sail up a fjord, over which hangs an enormous glacier, to visit Professor Erikson at Rekley Castle. Erikson, a world famous scientist, had been working on a formula to reverse gravity. Ivar heads a gang of thieves who want possession of the formula. A dwarf, employed by Ivar, is disguised as a gargoyle and replaced for the real one on the tower. Erikson, using a bar of metal, demonstrates to Dr Quest and his party how, by reversing gravity, he can cause objects to fall up instead of down. The dwarf steals the bar. When he demands payment, Ivar shoots him. Ivar then tries to get to the submarine, commanded by one of his henchmen, Emil. Quest and Race follow in a helicopter. Sven, one of Emil's crew, tries to down the helicopter with rifle shots. The rifle fire dislodges the glacier, burying Ivar and the submarine.

24. Terror Island

Dr Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit are in Hong Kong. Dr Quest disappears and Race receives a note warning that if he notifies the police, Quest will die. Race asks his friend, Jade, for help. Jade learns Quest is on Moy Tu Island, as the unwilling guest of Chu Sing Ling. Chu has discovered a method of enlarging animal life to gigantic proportions through the use of bacteria. On threat of torture, he demands that Quest help him find a means of controlling growth cells. Quest refuses. Race heads for Moy Tu in the hydrofoil. Jonny Quest, Hadji and Bandit go aboard as stowaways. Just as Chu announces Quest's time is up, Race, Jonny and Hadji break through. Although overpowered by a guard, the party makes its escape. Chu and the animals he has magnified to weird dimensions are destroyed by high voltage wires.

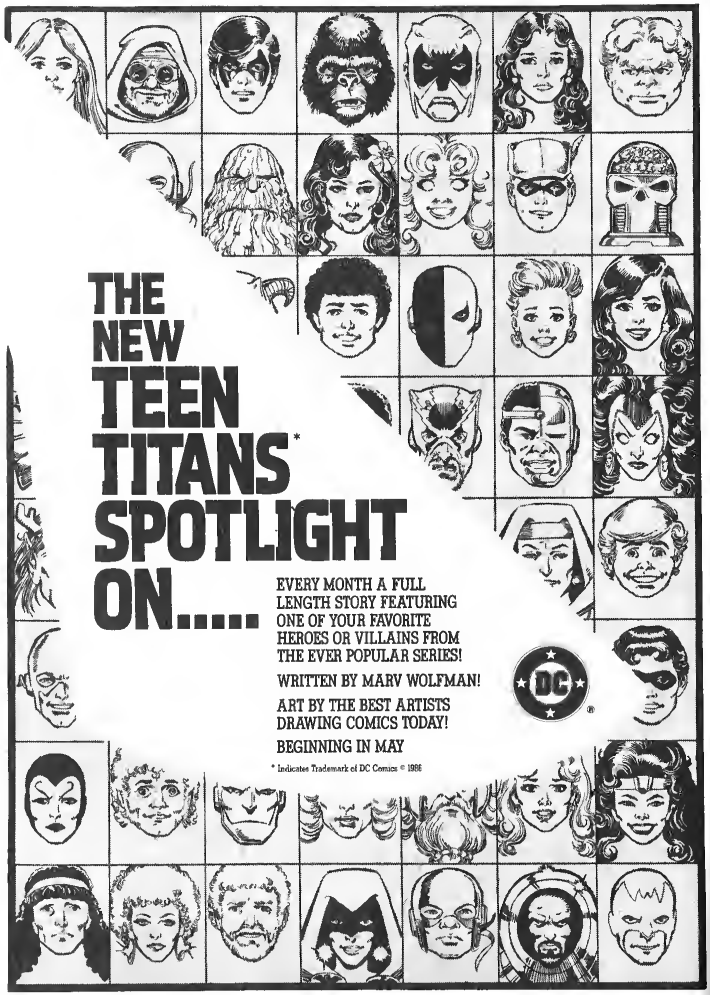
25. Monsters in the Monastery

Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit accompany Dr Quest when he visits his friend, Raj Guru, the high priest of Khumjung. Raj is worried that the Yeti, Abominable Snowmen, have come down from the mountains to cut his village off from civilization. When Bandit runs across a ropeway bridging a chasm, Jonny and Hadji follow him to an old palace. There Osom and his gang have disguised themselves as Yeti and embarked on a reign of terror to destroy Raj Guru. Quest and Race soon discover the boys are missing. Osom's gang captures Jonny and Hadji. The boys escape and a wild chase follows. Jonny, Hadji and Bandit get back to Race with proof that Osom and his gang have disguised themselves as Abominable Snowmen to mask their activities. Peace settles over Raj's domain when the real Snowmen wipe out Osom's gang.

26. The Sea Haunt

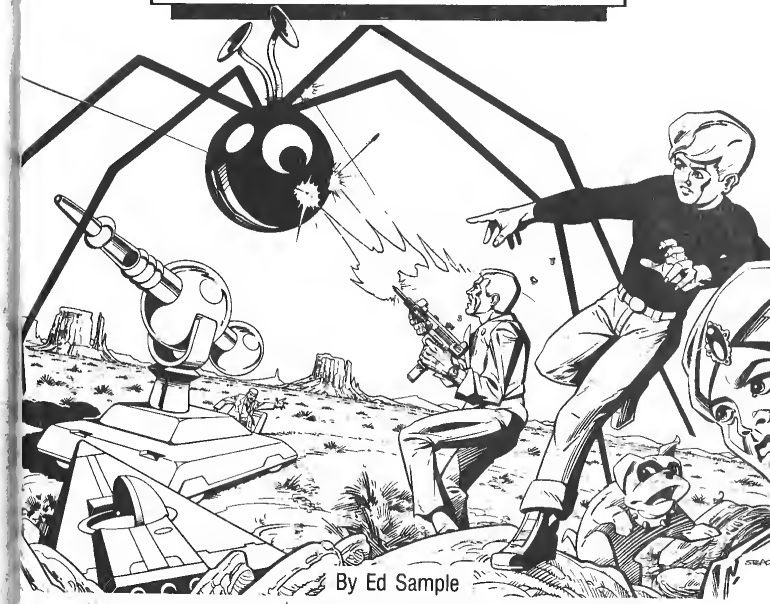
Dr Quest, Jonny, Race, Hadji and Bandit are flying above the Java Sea. They receive a radio message to watch for "The Star of Borneo," a disabled freighter carrying a mystery cargo. Sighting the ship, they learn that a sea monster boarded the ship. The log ends with the report that several of the crew were killed by the monster, which was deterred only by strong light. Their plane is smashed by the monster and since all life boats are gone, the party faces death. They find the chinese cook hidden in the ice box who tells them that the monster emerges only at night. Using torches and floodlights, they drive the monster up a high mast, and then into the darkness of the sea. Shortly after Dr Quest discovers the ship's mystery cargo is a treasure in gold and the party is sighted by a rescue plane. ●

Jim Korkis is a well known animation historian who has written regular animation columns for a variety of fanzines and magazines. For the past few years, he has been threatening to write a book about television animation. He is currently a member of the elite West Coast organization, Animation Answers, which provides information on animation to professional organizations as well as private individuals.



QUEST RENEWED

Comico brings back the most widely travelled 11-year-old in TV history



By Ed Sample

This June, Comico is proud to present all-new adventures of an animated character that has become a cult classic—*Jonny Quest*! Although only around for one season of original shows, Jonny is widely, and fondly, remembered by many comic and science-fiction fans today. Not only did the adventures of 11-year-old Jonny, his scientist father Benton, adventer/bodyguard Race Bannon, Indian orphan Hadji, and their irrepressible dog Bandit capture the imaginations and fascinations of all of us kids in 1966, its realistic animation, made it an enduring and bearable show for the adults to watch alongside. Now 20 years later, Comico hopes to recapture some of that special magic.

Quest: '86

In 1985 various nostalgic conversations about old cartoon shows saw the name *Jonny Quest* brought up. Jonny had become something of a cult favorite, and had developed quite a following. The immediate idea that came to mind was a revival, as a comic book, of the character. After some negotiating with Taft Entertainment, the company which owns the right to JQ, Comico found itself with a contract to produce 12 issues of *Jonny Quest*.

The task of returning *Jonny* to the public light after so long a time fell to Diana Schutz, a Comico powerhouse who also edits *The Elementals* and the multi-*Robotech* projects. Like many others involved in comics, Diana is of an era in which she saw the original show, and shares in the same fondness that many others do. She remembers the many adventures that got the viewer involved

The Steve Rude-illustrated story, from the first issue.

with the characters, and wanted to recapture that feeling on paper. Nevertheless, she recognizes the needs of the different medium, and has formulated plans accordingly. "Since we will market it to the direct sales market," she says, "namely an older audience, we will not be able to rely simply on the adventure aspects of *Jonny Quest*. The old shows relied 100 percent on adventure and education. I felt strongly that that was not enough for today's comic reading audience. There has to be strong character development."

Another aspect of overseeing *Jonny Quest*, which Diana is more familiar with through her *Robotech* experience, is working with a licensed product. As part of Comico's contract with Taft, they must clear all the storylines through the company. "Taft's main concern," Diana remarked, "was that visually the characters look like they looked on the TV show, and that they remain in character—basically good kids, with middle-class morals." This aspect of the project has not proven limiting in any way, though. Diana points out, "Every storyline that might raise a few eyebrows is preapproached, but so far they have agreed to everything. Judy Fireman, the editor at Taft, is fabulous, concerned and prompt."

The Write Stuff

Diana's gameplan for Jonny was twofold. First of all, she received a lot of response and interest from artists interested in drawing *Jonny*. This fit in fine with her plans because the amount of lead time required for Taft approval of each book, would have created a nightmare for any single artist. With visions of scheduling dancing in her head, Diana decided to use a different artist each issue. As firmly convicted as she was about multiple artists, she had just as strong a conviction that there should only be one writer, to keep a sense of balance. This prompted a difficult search for her. "I knew there are many great artists who could do this, but there are few great writers," she explains.

On the phone with Sam Kieth, inker of *Mage*, Diana related her dilemma to him. As luck would have it, Kieth had been talking to his good friend Bill Loebs. William Messner-Loebs, as many are aware, is the creative force behind Fantagraphics Books' *Journey*. Loebs had told Keith that it would be nice to have another project besides *Journey* to be working on. When Sam talked to Diana the next day, and she told him she was looking for a writer who would stay with the book, Sam Kieth suggested that Bill Loebs was available. Diana thought this was a marvelous idea because she was a long-time fan of *Journey*, and felt that Loebs had a real strength in character development. She called Bill up, and he thought it sounded like an interesting project.

By his own admission, originally Bill would never have considered such a project, because he was used to working with his own characters, and felt it would be difficult to work with someone else's. Diana convinced him that the company would be open to trying new things with the cast of *Quest*. As he delved a little into their pasts and their motivations, Bill began to notice the parallels between *Jonny Quest* and *Terry and the Pirates*, in terms of locales and characters. Another motivation for him was that he currently was getting more into Carl Barks, and the way he had been able to go in, take an animated cartoon character, and adapt it for the different needs of a comic book. This feat fascinated him, and *Jonny Quest* presented Loebs with the opportunity to try something similar. To Diana's delight, Bill phoned her and accepted the assignment.

As they began looking into the project, Loebs and Schutz put together some basic ideals. The continuity aspect will be minimal. Every issue has a beginning, middle, and end which is partly a function of wanting to have as many artistic interpretations of *Quest* as possible, and being a mirror of the TV show. Diana did want some elements to carry over. It will be the kind of continuity in that the events of a previous issue will have some kind of effect on a later issue. "These are concessions to reality," says Diana, and as an example she cites, "If Jonny breaks his arm one issue, which I am not saying is going to happen, he will not suddenly be out of a cast by the following issue."

Loebs also threw in as many contemporary references as possible. Though everyone looks the same as they did in 1964, both Comico and Taft wanted a 1980s attitude, science, and background. "The image in the writing," says Bill, "is that everything is through Jonny's consciousness."

Another aspect which Loebs found appealing is that Jonny's transportation is more advanced than that shown in *Journey*. Jonny can move around a lot which opens up a lot of new ground for Loebs as a writer.

When he came aboard, Bill suggested plotting out the first 12 issues, which he did in a quick period of time. After these synopses were in, he began work on the full stories. Each story goes from Bill to Taft, then to the artist. His basic worry was that Taft would have so many rules and regulations that it would be impossible to write. He freely admits that he is not the most flexible writer. To his delight, though, he has submitted his first three scripts, and Taft has been willing to do the things that haven't been done before. "It's a question of emphasis," he says, "you just have to be talking about different things in a comic book than you do in an animated feature, because with so much animation, just as in movies, you can hold an audience just by the fascination in the movement; sort of like music for the eyes. So there has to be more context just to keep people's minds interested." So far Taft agrees.

There is no direct contact for Bill with Taft. Diana sends their comments, and receives their responses. She is willing to run interference, so that Bill doesn't have to talk directly to them.

Loebs has a 12-issue commitment to the book, which is the same contract that Comico has with Taft. He is eagerly waiting to hear about an extension as he has another six plots in various stages of development, beyond the 12 he has already plotted. He would like to see the series continue for a long time.

Not in His Wildey Dream

As previously mentioned, Diana Schutz has found it necessary to have different artists on each issue to keep up with the lead time required by Taft. She has not found this to be a problem, due to the tremendous response by a number of artists willing to contribute their talents. No response received was greater, however, than the one by *Jonny Quest*'s creator, Doug Wildey.

Although involved with a number of other projects, when Doug Wildey heard about the revival of *Jonny Quest*, he wanted to be a part of it. To that end, he was able to contribute not only a painted cover, but a 12-page story in the first issue. He has done the artwork, and has also written and lettered the story entitled, "The Sands of Khasa Tahid." Anyone who ever saw the original show will be right at home with the flavor of the characters portrayed. All the elements of the genuine article are here: Race and the boys in the middle of the desert looking for a lost city which Dr. Quest has discovered. Unbeknownst to them, the discovery of this city will reveal more about the secret plans of the terrorist, Dr. Zin (a holdover from the TV show), than the Doctor wants discovered. This leads our heroes into unforeseen peril, and a timely meeting with another character from the TV series, Jezebel Jade.

Wildey's story is beautifully executed and is an updated version of his creation, in keeping with plans for the book. While Wildey has contributed another cover, and a promotional poster, his own constraints will severely limit any contribution to the book he can make. Also, as relayed by Bill Loebs, who did talk to Doug Wildey to get some ideas, "Remember, for Doug this is a 20-year-old project, which he has not seen since it was first produced. It is far from being the cult item for him, that it is for the rest of us." Regardless, Wildey's contribution in the first issue is a terrific send-off for the book.

Artists Roulette

The backup story in issue #1 continues the story begun by Doug Wildey. It marks the start of Bill

Another Rude sequence from the premiere issue.

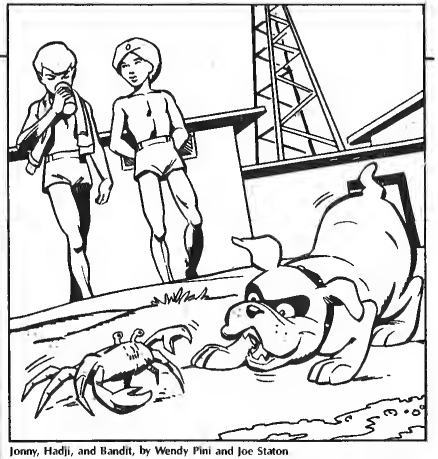
Loebs's writing tenure, and is pencilled by Steve Rude of *Nexus* fame, with inks by Mike Royer. Coloring chores are performed by Matt Wagner, noted for *Mage*, with lettering by Bob Pinaha.

Bill Loebs writes one strip per month, and so far has varied between full script and Marvel-style. Many of the artists are asking for full scripts, but that doesn't mean changes don't play a part. Originally both Loebs and Diana Schutz assumed a lot of the research would be done on the book, which is Loebs's forte, but once he got into it, he realized it wasn't needed as extensively as he thought. "With 26 pages," Bill says, "once the plot is rolling the amount of room for extraneous locale detail is small, and you don't just want to throw something in."

He also found his need to do realistic, tightly-researched locales has gone by the boards. Part of it is that he is influenced by what his collaborators want to draw. He has included certain areas that he knows are their specialities to utilize in the stories. This causes a problem when cancellations and scheduling glitches have resulted in a different artist assignment than originally called for. Those personal touches added for one artist results in a revision of the script because those components may not work well for the new artist. Despite this, Loebs will continue to give his collaborators tremendous freedom.

Further artwork lined up for *Jonny Quest* include a Wendy Pini pencilled, and Joe Staton inked story for #2. The Insight Studios dynamite trio of Mark Wheatley, Marc Hempel, and Kathryn Mayer (last seen in Warp Graphics' *Blood of the Innocent*) contribute the visuals for #3, which will also feature a cover by Dave Stevens. Tom Yeates will handle issue #4, and Dan Day, late of *Aztec Ace*, will illustrate #5. Further down the road Ken Steacy, who has already contributed a *Jonny* cover for *Comico Checklist* (which features the giant spider which menaced our heroes during the opening credits of each show), will be doing an entire issue—pencils, inks and colors—as soon as he is through inking the *Robotech Graphic Novel*. His issue is tentatively #10.

Artists hoping to get more involved include Mike Royer, inker in #1, who hopes to do some more as his regular job at Walt Disney Studios permits. Matt Wagner also has further plans with the book. In addition, each issue will feature pinups of the various characters and among those lined up to do those are Bill Willingham, Terry Austin, Murphy Anderson, Adam Kubert, and Brent Anderson. Also making artistic contributions are L. Lois Buhalis who did lettering, and Tom Orzechowski who re-worked the logo, re-designed from the original.



Jonny, Hadji, and Bandit, by Wendy Pini and Joe Staton

Other features of the book include an interview with Joe Barbera in #1, conducted by Steve Kaye. Also, Diana Schutz hopes to do a "Dr. Quest Fact Page," patterned after the old "Science Facts" one-pagers that appeared in comic books. "I loved those," says Diana, "and I believe it fits with the spirit of Quest." Although each issue of *JQ* should be a success, the structure of the book, is "a nightmare from an editor's point of view," says Schutz, "with different artists every issue and pinups to accommodate all artists who don't have time to do a full issue." Once it is all together it should be worth the effort.

Scenes from the Past

After the rock'em, sock'em, kisses-you-never-got, action-packed first issue, Bill Loebs will take the reader back to a fateful occasion in the lives of the Quests—the day Jonny's mother died. With Wendy Pini and Joe Staton's artwork, *JQ* #2 will be a powerful story. "I am thrilled to death," says Diana Schutz, "not just that Taft has allowed us to open the Quest story up like this, but also the action scenes are dynamic, and there is romance and pathos. I was literally brought to tears, which is not an easy thing to accomplish. The writing is fabulous." Issue #2 could be the most important *Jonny Quest* story of the year. Besides the scenes with Jonny's mother, it also introduces Race Bannon into the Quest's life. A beginning to their current team, which you might not expect. This story sets up a progression for other stories to follow. It also sets up a lot of the motivations to be able to continue. Jonny, is the observer, and Dr. Quest is the motivator. This will be the issue for Quest fans not to miss.

Future stories throughout 1986 will, of course, see the emphasis on action, but will also contain large doses of humor. Locales will be everywhere from the South American jungle to the set of a movie on location. While each of the characters will be featured in varying capacities, some will be more prominent in certain issues. For example, Jezebel Jade takes the spotlight in #5. Look for plenty of surprises along the way.

Who Are Those Guys?

Bill Loebs says that what appealed to him about the animated show was that the characters were realistically drawn. The kids acted like kids. The dog acted like a dog. "The rationale for the old show was adventure,' he explains, "You can do adventure for kids, adventure for adults, and in some cases, cross the boundaries for everyone. Hopefully, we are accomplishing that here, where you don't have to contend with the Saturday morning moral majority."

Although the adventure aspects of the story speak for themselves, both Diana and Bill see characterization as the means for differentiating and pacing themselves away from the animated show. To that end, they have very strong ideas of who these

A pencilled page by Wendy Pini from JONNY QUEST #2.

A cityscape by Mark Wheatley and Marc Hempel, from the third issue.

people are.

"I see Jonny as the quintessential 11-year-old kid," says Diana, "adventuresome, bright, mischievous, also sensitive as revealed in #2. He has been the hardest to develop." Bill Loebs adds, "Originally, I thought Jonny and Hadji were interchangeable until I re-reviewed the old shows. I will be making Jonny a free-wheeling kid: the kind that follows people, gets into trouble, makes things explode, that sort of thing." He goes on to add, "He is the trickiest character to handle, there is so little you can do. He can't be too clever, or too strong or even too wise. I will try to solve this by allowing him to be the catalyst, the person the adults talk to."

Diana sees Hadji as being more sensitive. "He's an orphan, with magical powers that are always alluded to. "His entire culture tends to be sensitive," points out Schutz, "so although he is bright, he is more reserved." Bill Loebs found, in developing Hadji, that he would be investing him with mystical powers: the magic of the East. He has found the need though, to tone it down to avoid having an easy out in each issue for the problems they get into. "That is the problem with writing super-heroes," says Loebs. "My original notion for Hadji was as a trickster from New Delhi, but that made him too much like Jonny, and real differences would have been difficult to write. What I have done is made the magic more difficult. These will also be things he can teach Jonny."

Another aspect about the boys that Loebs found interesting from the show was that they could do anything without getting into trouble. "Every time I thought, 'Boy, are they going to get it this time, nothing happened,' he said. "I'm trying to avoid an episode where the kids learn a lesson, but I am writing an episode where they talk about how the boys are irresponsible, in spite of Race's tutoring."

Big plans are in store for Dr. Quest as he is brought more into the forefront. "I liken him to Reed Richards with a sense of humor," observes Diana, "smart, but less a walking textbook than Richards; a more well-rounded human being. He is not absent-minded but immersed in his scientific work, although aware of what's going on around him." Like many viewers of the original show, Bill remembered Dr. Quest as not being involved in a lot of the action of the original series, but reviewing the show proved otherwise. He intends to keep Dr. Quest in the thick of it. "Dr. Quest is the motivator, the reason for being where they are," says Loebs, "and frequently the one who figures the way out of a situation." Bill keeps looking for ways to humanize him, make him an interesting character to write, and especially making sure to separate him from Race.

Diana sees Race Bannon as the All-American-jock-turned-Secret-Service-agent. The kind of guy every girl would love to have. Although he originally found himself in a situation he did not want—he was not interested in playing nursemaid—he has grown very fond of the boys. He is less of a scholar than he might be, since his job is to tutor Jonny and Hadji. Loebs is trying to make the role of the tutor more prominent, something like Race reads it then teaches it. "It adds touches of realism," he feels.

Bandit will be the focal point for the humor and funny shtick, acting much the same as he did in the TV show. Amazingly, neither Loebs nor Schutz have any great hopes of characterizaion here.

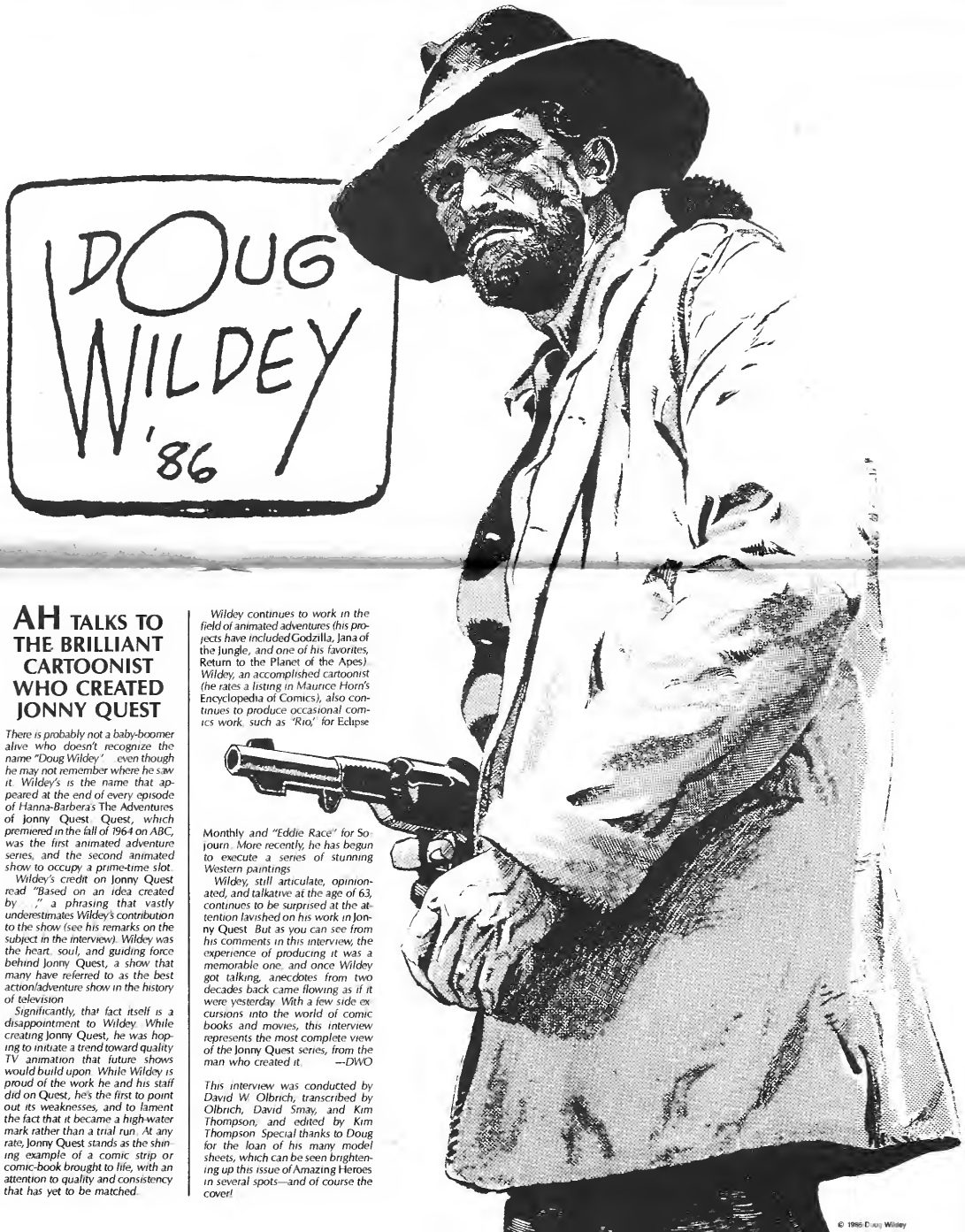
Jezebel Jade, the only recurring female character in JQ has a basis from the old show, although she is not widely remembered. She is a gun for hire. She and Race have a thing going, but it's not everyday, more like when they come together. She is seen briefly in issue #1, but a more thorough portrayal of her will appear in #5. Diana Schutz is unashamedly full of praise for her. "She is full of wonderful dialogue, and very competent. She is not drawn wearing skin-tight long johns, and her breasts are not the size of watermelons. She's classy and sexy as all get out, and she's nobody's fool. She represents what women in the '80s have been trying to be." Obviously Jezebel Jade is the character Diana relates to the most. As she points out, "I don't relate much to 11-year-old boys any more."

Beyond being the typical bad guy, the character of Dr. Zin really hasn't developed yet. He is an ominous shadow in the background. He is evil, but as to his motivation, we don't really know it yet. Bill Loebs plans for him to be a recurring villain, but used sparingly the first year. "It seems better than having a different world-threatening mad scientist every issue," he explains, "He will appear in various capacities, but not always in direct conflict with the Quest party."

Futurequest

As previously mentioned, the first 12 issues of *Jonny Quest* have been plotted, and are in various stages of completion. Issue #4 has just been finished. The first issue will ship June 20, and will be at stores the last week of June, then monthly after that, just three months shy of the 22nd Anniversary of the first *Jonny Quest* episode. Plans are formulating beyond the 12th issue, and it is hoped that readership will warrant it. One thing that will undoubtedly help the book, and further awaken the interests of those *Jonny* fans out there is a proposed new *Jonny Quest* series debuting in the fall. As plans currently stand, the new *Jonny Quest* will be part of the *Funtastic World of Hanna-Barbera* program syndicated on Sundays this fall. The new show promises to be as exciting as the original.

The comic also looks to be a sensational find for those fans who never got enough of the original, or those who never had the pleasure of the original. In many ways it could be lot better. So onward through the '80s and into the '90s, the word has come down—*The Quest Continues!* ●



AH TALKS TO THE BRILLIANT CARTOONIST WHO CREATED JONNY QUEST

There is probably not a baby-boomer alive who doesn't recognize the name "Doug Wildey" even though he may not remember where he saw it. Wildey's is the name that appeared at the end of every episode of Hanna-Barbera's The Adventures of Jonny Quest. *Quest, which premiered in the fall of 1964 on ABC, was the first animated adventure series, and the second animated show to occupy a prime-time slot.*

Wildey's credit on Jonny Quest *read "Based on an idea created by . . ," a phrasing that vastly underestimates Wildey's contribution to the show (see his remarks on the subject in the interview). Wildey was the heart, soul, and guiding force behind* Jonny Quest, *a show that many have referred to as the best action/adventure show in the history of television.*

Significantly, that fact itself is a disappointment to Wildey. While creating Jonny Quest, *he was hoping to initiate a trend toward quality TV animation that future shows would build upon. While Wildey is proud of the work he and his staff did on* Quest, *he's the first to point out its weaknesses, and to lament the fact that it became a high-water mark rather than a trial run. At any rate,* Jonny Quest *stands as the shining example of a comic strip or comic-book brought to life, with an attention to quality and consistency that has yet to be matched.*

Wildey continues to work in the field of animated adventures (his projects have included Godzilla, Jana of the Jungle, *and one of his favorites,* Return to the Planet of the Apes). *Wildey, an accomplished cartoonist (he rates a listing in Maurice Horn's* Encyclopedia of Comics), *also continues to produce occasional comics work, such as "Rio," for* Eclipse Monthly *and "Eddie Race" for* Sojourn. *More recently, he has begun to execute a series of stunning Western paintings.*

Wildey, still articulate, opinionated, and talkative at the age of 63, continues to be surprised at the attention lavished on his work in Jonny Quest. *But as you can see from his comments in this interview, the experience of producing it was a memorable one, and once Wildey got talking, anecdotes from two decades back came flowing as if it were yesterday. With a few side excursions into the world of comic books and movies, this interview represents the most complete view of the* Jonny Quest *series, from the man who created it.* —*DWO*

This interview was conducted by David W. Olbrich, transcribed by Olbrich, David Smay, and Kim Thompson, and edited by Kim Thompson. Special thanks to Doug for the loan of his many model sheets, which can be seen brightening up this issue of Amazing Heroes *in several spots—and of course the cover!*

© 1986 Doug Wildey

Amazing Heroes: *Can you go through the creation process of* Jonny Quest? *Now, Hanna-Barbera had found a way to get* The Flinstones *on prime-time TV, on ABC. What happened next that inspired them to try* Jonny Quest?

Doug Wildey: I was looking for a job. I was coming from another studio where I'd worked for about 12 or 14 weeks under Alex Toth, on a thing called *Space Angel*. I had applied to Universal (which was called something else at the time) as sort of a storyboard/production designer. Stanley Kramer's office got interested in my stuff, so I figured, rather than move back to Arizona, where my family lives, maybe I could latch onto Stanley Kramer. Hanna-Barbera was up the street from there, so I simply crossed the street, went up to Hanna-Barbera, and said, "Look, I'm an artist," and so forth. A couple of people there had read some of my comic strips and comic books, so they said, "Come in and see [Joe] Barbera." The following day, or maybe even the same day, Barbera called me up and said, "Can you design, in your style, a show *Jack Armstrong*?"

AH: *This is the radio character, right?*

Wildey: Right. I said, "Yeah." So I storyboarded one, wrote some dialogue, wrote a little script, and then I did a kind of a presentation, showing a little continuity, a little color, and what the characters looked like. I worked on that thing for I guess three months, and listened to tapes of guys auditioning for a whole day.

Now that I think of it—and I never honestly thought about it before—you had almost the *Jonny Quest* setup in *Jack Armstrong*. It had Jack Armstrong, a young guy, about 17. Uncle—Frank or Uncle Jack, I'm not sure—a sidekick, and a girl, and they went around having adventures.

Again, referring to *Jonny Quest*, it was a sort of global adventure type of thing, so I put them in Africa. I wanted to get into science, so I read *Popular Science*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Science Digest*, all that stuff, trying to project what would be happening 10 years hence.

By the way, that's how *Jonny Quest* was set up. We figured it might run for years, so I wanted to keep it current for ten years. As it worked out, the things I came up with were all out my head, other than projections from *Scientific American* and the like. We had one show where they went to the South Pole. I needed a vehicle, so I invented a thing which I called a "snowskimmer." Now, in retrospect, why didn't I think of "snowmobile"? A simple thing like that, right? There was no snowmobile at the time, so I patterned the thing after those swamp buggies in Louisiana that had the big propeller on the back and would go stomping

through the water—they're nice visual things anyway. That's what I came up with, this vehicle that would ride on the snow, and I called it a snowskimmer. I was *projecting*, okay? Now, of course, snowmobiles are everyday things.

I would read about things like hydrofoils. I had hydrofoils only because I thought America, with all its waterways, would be inundated by hydrofoils like they are with snowmobiles. I had a hovercraft.

AH: *The hovercraft that natives were throwing spears at in the credits.*

Wildey: Right. That is all stuff we did for *Jack Armstrong*, none of that was from *Jonny Quest*.

Now, the rights to *Jack Armstrong* were owned by someone, and Hanna-Barbera, I presume, after watching what I had been doing on *Jack Armstrong*, said, "Why do we need *Jack Armstrong*?"

AH: *Why license it? Why not just create something you could own?*

Wildey: At which point Barbera came and said, "Can you create a show for us?" And I said "Yeah!" and went home and wrote *Jonny Quest* that night—which was not that tough.

AH: *Well, not after all the research you'd done.*

Wildey: Not just that. I had a lot to draw on. I drew on Jackie Cooper's movies, his relationship to, let us say, George Raft or Wallace Beery—that type of relationship. I drew upon some of the Frankie Darrow movies—there's a name you never heard, Frankie Darrow was always the misunderstood kid—still a good guy, but nobody understood him. But he worked with a male lead in most cases. I had him to draw from. And then of course I had, let's face it, *Terry and the Pirates*. Not only do I think Caniff is still the greatest storyteller in the business, but after I worked for him and got to know the guy . . . I mean, they say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery [*laughs*]. So, drawing upon all of those, it was not all that tough.

The Barbera influence was felt there because he had gone to see a movie called *Dr. No* and wanted to get in stuff like "007"—numbers. Which we included, by the way, in the first *Jonny Quest*. It was called "Jonny Quest File 037" or something. We dropped that later: it didn't work. But that was his father's code name as he worked for the government as a scientist and that kind of thing. That influence was felt.

The actual putting together of the kid and his father and the bodyguard was no big thing. Couple of hours' work and I had the outline. And I believe the following day I wrote the first premise, which was the Sargasso Sea. I wanted a mysterious element. The Sargasso Sea exists—not quite as strongly as I had it—but it was at one time called the Sea of Dead Ships, or whatever the heck it was. It seemed like a good setting for adventure. And then of course I wanted a real plausible adventure—if you could call it plausible—in the sense that things were being manipulated by real people. It wasn't really happening and it had to be explained at the end. This is the part of some of the writing that I didn't like—where they'd come in with the Monster-of-the-week type of thing, mostly rip-offs.

So, I used elements I had seen before—somebody once said there are seven basic plots in writing and seven only. Nobody ever comes up with a totally original type of thing. I also firmly believe that complexity has no place in almost any kind of entertainment other than these snow-job mechanical-type movies. Things that I personally don't like. I tried to avoid things like that. I talk to people about *2001* and they do these rave numbers on *2001*, but outside of a nice recording of the "Blue Danube" waltz I didn't see much in that movie. It was complex. Later, I read that the director left off the entire narrative written by the novelist to go over all the things that were happening; he felt it might be better if he just dropped the narrative track, and he did. And so the audience would form all their own conclusions and come out of the picture babbling about whether they've got the right idea of what's going on. But frankly, it went right over my head. I don't like pictures that are based on mechanical things.

Science fiction, in most cases, I don't like. The ones that I do like—the original *Thing*, the movie, was super. Because here were human beings trapped in a place where you were fearful for them. And you knew they could die and it was a hell of a good movie. *Star Wars* left me dead. I'm supposed to be a great visual guy, and all that stuff, but I've got to tell you, none of those *Star Wars* pictures did anything for me. Outside of sitting there marveling at the technical effects, the people were absolute cardboard. They were *less* real than *Jonny Quest* characters, in my book. Pictures like *From the Earth to the Moon*. Those kind of films just did nothing for me at all. They were nice mechanical models moving around and sunlight and shadow and space and that type of thing. I've always considered that a crashing bore. Give me a young girl in an old dark house and I'll give you a picture [*laughs*]. A frame of reference. Or even in a science fiction vein, I don't know what you'd call, for instance, *Quest for Fire* but I thought that was superb. And again we're into simplicity. There was no complexity there. This was probably the simplest story that could be told in a movie. The theme was so simple it was unbelievable. Basically, creating fire and having a baby at the end of the picture. And yet the picture worked in every way for me. I guess you could call that science fiction. I'm not sure what genre you'd call it.

What I tried to concentrate on were the characters and the relationships between the characters, not just talking heads. By and large it seems to me that the show worked as a whole only because of the way the relationships between the characters themselves worked, and their relationships to other characters—incidentals, villains, whatever.

The philosophy that I had behind *Jonny Quest* was: practically everyone who has ever seen *Gunga Din* remembers scenes from it just as clearly now as when they saw it. Television doesn't work that way. Nobody remembers scenes from television. It goes in your head, zap, there's a commercial, zap, the next show is on, it just goes right through. You retain a very small percentage of anything that you see on television with any kind of excitement level. I wanted to do something they would remember. And it has worked that way. There are people now, who are 35 and 40 years old, who stagger up and say, "*Jonny Quest*—I remember . . ." and then they actually go on to describe a scene, movement by movement. That was the biggest kick that I got out of *Jonny Quest*—that sense of timelessness.

AH: *Looking at those photocopies I remember a lot of the characters and the episodes.*

Wildey: But they don't mean much if they are not put together in the context of a show, which they haven't been at all in the shows I've worked on recently. The last two shows I've been responsible for are *Godzilla* and *Jana of the Jungle*. There wasn't enough attention given to the writers.

We didn't have a photo of Doug Wildey to put here, but Peevy in ROCKETEER is as close to Doug as Dave Stevens can make him—"right down to the dialogue."

I did some re-writing myself on occasion to keep the things alive, but they didn't have the same kind of *integrity*. I guess you would call it writing integrity that *Jonny Quest* did—I guess because *Jonny Quest* was the first show of its type on network, the first animated adventure show.

Shows like this, when they're listed in *TV Guide* or written up in newspaper articles, are simply called cartoons, but I don't call them that. The pure cartoons, which everybody loves, the old Bugs-Bunny-and-Sylvester cartoons, were masterpieces of their type. They were pure cartoons. I don't like to put the two together.

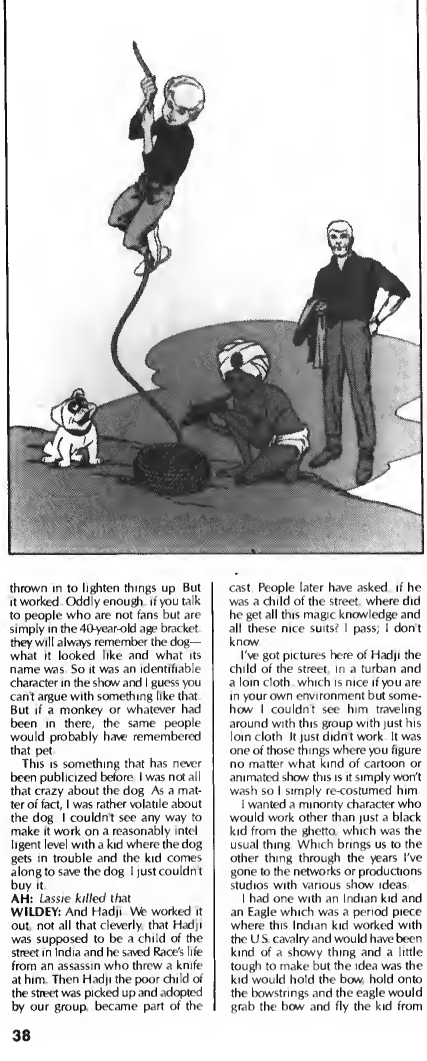
Which we did in *Jonny Quest*, actually, because Bandit was a cartoon dog. A guy named Dick Bickenbach designed the dog. Prior to the designing of the dog Joe Barbera and I had talked about a pet for Jonny, and somehow a dog didn't seem all that adventurous to me. I happen to like dog shows, *Lassie* and whatever, but they'd pretty much been done. *Lassie* had been a TV show and a series of movies. I believe Bandit was a suggestion on the part of a toy manufacturer to get a saleable stuffed toy. Because I had designed a whole gang of other pets for Jonny.

AH: *Other than dogs.*

Wildey: I had a small white cheetah and a monkey. Of course I liked the idea of the monkey, only because of the story possibilities—what a monkey could do that a dog couldn't do realistically. I thought that would work a little better. But the dog is the thing we went with. Bickenbach did a nice job, but he was a Flintstone-type of designer. Somehow the dog worked, though. I thought it was probably the weakest part of the show from that standpoint.

AH: *Bandit seemed to be used for comic relief.*

Wildey: Yeah. I tried to keep him working as comic relief so he wouldn't look so much like a prop



thrown in to lighten things up. But it worked. Oddly enough, if you talk to people who are not fans but are simply in the 40-year-old age bracket, they will always remember the dog—what it looked like and what its name was. So it was an identifiable character in the show and I guess you can't argue with something like that. But if a monkey or whatever had been in there, the same people would probably have remembered that pet.

This is something that has never been publicized before. I was not all that crazy about the dog. As a matter of fact, I was rather volatile about the dog. I couldn't see any way to make it work on a reasonably intelligent level with a kid where the dog gets in trouble and the kid comes along to save the dog. I just couldn't buy it.

AH: *Lassie killed that.*

WILDEY: And Hadji. We worked it out, not all that cleverly, that Hadji was supposed to be a child of the street in India and he saved Race's life from an assassin who threw a knife at him. Then Hadji the poor child of the street was picked up and adopted by our group, became part of the cast. People later have asked, if he was a child of the street, where did he get all this magic knowledge and all these nice suits? I pass; I don't know.

I've got pictures here of Hadji the child of the street, in a turban and a loin cloth, which is nice if you are in your own environment but somehow I couldn't see him traveling around with this group with just his loin cloth. It just didn't work. It was one of those things where you figure no matter what kind of cartoon or animated show this is it simply won't wash so I simply re-costumed him.

I wanted a minority character who would work other than just a black kid from the ghetto, which was the usual thing. Which brings us to the other thing through the years I've gone to the networks or productions studios with various show ideas.

I had one with an Indian kid and an Eagle which was a period piece where this Indian kid worked with the U.S. cavalry and would have been kind of a showy thing and a little tough to make but the idea was the kid would hold the bow, hold onto the bowstrings and the eagle would grab the bow and fly the kid from place to place. It was a little kid [*laughs*] and not too heavy. But it was a big eagle. [*laughs*]

Anyway the phrase that stands out in my mind from the network people that I talked to it was flat "Indians don't go!" Period. I translated this to mean that there is not that much interest in Indians—which to me is a complete surprise because I thought regardless of what the character was, if the character did interesting things, that would do it. But the word was, "Indians don't go" so the show never got anyplace. It was called "Little Bow" and he had contact with bears and outlaws and the whole schtick.

And based on that, I guess there were some objections to Hadji. I had heard this but I couldn't pin it down as to who said what or how official it was but I felt there was enough disparity between these two kids who were roughly the same age—rather than have two twins or two kid who came from the same lifestyle.

I figured Hadji would work better. The magic he could perform I believe was a little overdone. I did a bunch of promotional stuff on Hadji once I had the character incorporated into the cast. Then we did the old rope trick where he climbed up the rope. The cobras. That stuff I figured, okay, I'll go that far. I let him crawl up a rope no one is holding. However, it went a little too far with the disappearing act that was in show #2 or #3 with the mummy where he jumps from one water jug to another. Which we later saw in Mr. Spielberg's film, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. We also saw the snake pit in *Raiders*. Maybe that's why I liked that picture so much—I was saying, "Boy what great writing . . . wait a minute, *I* wrote that."

AH: *Spielberg's the right age to have been heavily influenced by Jonny Quest.*

WILDEY: And also Mr. Lucas. In fact, when this article comes out I'd like to send a copy to each of these guys.

The serial thing—I was always hooked on serials when I was a kid going to black-and-white movies in the local theater. For 15 cents, you would see two features, a trailer and a serial. I tried to incorporate the serial approach to *Jonny Quest* in that yes, it was bigger than life, yes, it can't actually happen, but if it's done properly you'll believe it. That was the philosophy behind it. There is a line that I never like to go beyond, because it goes from semi-believable high-adventure to straight-out garbage. When scripts would come in I would read the material. There where things I would simply cross out when the writer had overstepped the bounds. The first writers were cartoon writers and at the beginning nobody in the studio—the writers or the animators or the layout people, none of them—understood exactly how this show was to be projected. Later they got some heavyweight writers that came in out of live action and novels and they understood it, so it wasn't quite as tough.

AH: *Who was doing the writing? You had control over script approval.*

Wildey: I hesitate to use the word "control." If there was a script that came in that I didn't like I would make it known and it would be changed. In that way I had control. However, in many instances myself and Barbera, or Barbera and the writer, would work together and one way or another it would be straightened out, at which point if I had a storyboard that I felt could be jazzed up from a visual standpoint and still keep the flavor of the writing I would do it, there was also some control there.

When a situation happened in the show I would simply, as I did with a comic strip or a comic book or whatever, sit back for a moment and say, "Am I going to buy this thing?" And if I don't buy it, that's it. I think in today's Saturday morning television no one cares whether or not an audience has any particular intelligence. I had a horror of an eight-year-old kid sitting in front of *Jonny Quest* and going, "Gee, that's terrible."

I didn't actually talk to the man personally, but I understand Rod Serling liked Jonny Quest very much—perhaps it was the writing style. Once I would hear a few things like this it certainly didn't hurt anything because I was taking a lot of shots at the beginning. A lot. I was just doing the thing that I had been doing my whole life, and yet I was in a studio where nobody had done it before.

The other thing was that early in the game, after *Jonny Quest* was sold, they had a problem getting sponsors.

AH: *Why?*

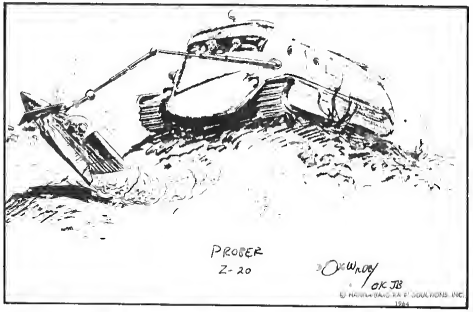
Wildey: It was brand-new and had never been tried. It was not the *Flintstones*; it was not anything that anyone had ever seen before. At that time sponsors were not exactly lined up knocking on the door. As a matter of fact that show went on the air with two or three sustaining sponsors for three or four weeks.

AH: *Do you remember who those sponsors were?*

Wildey: I can remember some of them. Skippy Peanut Butter, various toothpastes, the brand of which I forget. I was told they were having trouble getting sponsors, which is not exactly a hilarious way to get a show off the ground. I think it strengthened in its eighth or tenth week. The show had a reasonably good appeal.

Only because a parent that was watching the show with his kid wouldn't be super-bored by it. At least from what I've been told later, people used to sit there with their parents and their parents at least put up with it. I don't know if they were all that thrilled, but they hung in there with the kid and didn't seem bored or put out.

What I wanted was a moving comic strip, with the blacks and the shadows. If you look at the show you can see certain parts where I got mixed-up working with the animators. But when you get a whole studio full of people working on a show—Hanna-Barbera had two shows on the air, the *Flintstones* and *Jonny Quest*, and with a huge studio and a whole gang of people working on it there is no way you can control everything. Things just slip on by.



When I did the pilot film to sell the show, I'd written the sequence and set it up dramatically and even indicated where I wanted the music. At that point I had the best animator in Hollywood, a guy named Irv Spence, and in that sequence the shadows were carried through. Later, of course, in some cases they were added and in some cases they were dropped.

AH: *How was the writing on Jonny Quest assigned?*

Wildey: Joe Barbera was basically the guy who contacted the writers, talked to them about the show, gave them the flavor, gave them my drawings. And in many cases, I'd work up characters for every show and give them to the actors.

AH: *So they could see what the characters looked like.*

Wildey: Yeah. Voice actors are incredible. I never had a problem working with an actor.

AH: *You want to run through the cast?*

Wildey: Tim Matheson was Jonny Quest. I don't remember Hadji. Don Messick finally assumed the role of Dr. Quest. John Stephenson did Dr. Quest first.*

I have always gone with actors that were instantly recognizable and still were not all that deep—that seem to be guys having fun. My favorite was [Clark] Gable, who always seemed to be playing a part. He wasn't really a believeable guy in that sense, yet Gable playing something became believable only because you knew you were watching Gable. He had an almost sardonic, throw-away approach to his lines. That's what I wanted for Race Bannon: bigger-than-life dialogue. In the pilot, "Sargasso Sea," the kid's in trouble, frogmen are jumping on him, Race Bannon is swinging down from a rope, and the line that I originally wrote was, "Hang on kid! Here comes the cavalry to the rescue!" It wasn't included—that was Barbera's choice. It was "Hang on, Jonny. I'm coming" or something. It's simply the way two people see how a piece of dialogue would work. It was a disagreement and the loser of course was me, because this guy owns the studio. No big deal.

I listened to a lot of different guys. All of them were good; finally Mike Roads seemed to be the guy that

* *EDITOR'S NOTE ON QUEST'S VOICES: This is the same Tim Matheson who later starred in* Animal House; *he also played Jayce on* Space Ghost, *as well as being featured in* Young Samson and Goliath *and* Sindbad Jr. the Sailor. *Hadji was voiced by Danny Bravo. Mike Road, who also appeared in* Space Ghost *and several other series, played Mr. Fantastic in the late-70s Depatie-Freleng* Fantastic Four *show. As for Don Messick, who also voiced Bandit, it would probably be easier to list the shows he hasn't worked on than the ones he has.*

somehow had that approach—that light touch and still made it believable.

AH: *Seems to me that I remember as a child that Race's voice seemed to pop up in a lot of other cartoons at the time.*

Wildey: As a matter of fact, he also popped up in *Jonny Quest*, as other voices. In most cases on an animated show we take what was called a multiple voice actor. "Multiple" meaning under the union rules one actor could give you three voices for whatever the agreed-upon, going rate is for actors for a day. Theoretically when you get an actor you can get his body in the studio for recording for eight hours, which of course is ridiculous because you can get the whole show recorded in an hour with lots of people working. But the theory is, you can actually have them there for eight hours and you can get three voices from them.

When a script comes in, the writer has somebody in a crowd someplace saying, "Hey, look at that." As a producer, I always have the choice: do I need this line? Because if I do I'll either go in and do it myself or I will then pay an actor double rates to say one line. In most cases the line isn't needed, and I could work a story with a visual in drawing a background with a movement and have no dialogue and it would still work fine.

AH: *Did you ever do any of the voices yourself?*

Wildey: Yes, but not on *Jonny Quest*.

A lot of work was done on the writing, a lot of work was done on the dialogue, and, of course, a great, great deal was done on the relationship and the models, the characters. I've learned a lot since. I've done 26 *Godzillas*, 26 *Jonny Quests*, 13 *Jana of the Jungle* and 13 *Planet of the Apes*. And each one is, of course, like anything else, a learning process.

That was a show I liked which no one in the world ever saw—*Return to the Planet of the Apes*. The writing there was good. I wrote 13 premises which they linked up as a saga; it was a bad idea and it will never happen again. The reason for that is when shows go into syndication they are not necessarily put on the air in order. They are just haphazardly thrown on the air. If you have a cliff-hanger kind of saga and they put on show number six the audience is totally bewildered as to what has happened before. So that was the end of that. As far as I know it was the only one that was ever done that way. I originally took the Fox films and simply expanded from the movies. I had already seen and worked a whole show on the things the audiences were already familiar with. I expected more out of that show than ever happened with it. As far as I know it has never been repeated in America or at least on any kind of network. I can't quite figure it because it wasn't a bad show.

The *Jonny Quest* thing had a certain thread of continuity to it in that we established that Jonny lived in Palm Beach Fla. and then when he travels we would end the show at some point perhaps in the country where the adventure finished but the audience had established where he had come from and assumed then that he had gone back there. We didn't start every show there but once you establish in an audience's mind certain things they tend to accept that.

I never got into background. I've been asked "Where is Jonny's mother?" I never gave it a thought. If I walk down the street and see a kid and his father I accept that fact. I don't say "Where is the mother?" However, to kids that watched *Jonny Quest* when they were eight years old who are now 30 years old it might mean something. Their inclination seems to be that they want to know all about Jonny's mother and his background.

All we were trying to do is make a piece of entertainment. Rounding out a character that much I don't find very appealing. I don't think you need to get into that much background material on a character. If the characters are established at the beginning—this is who they are and this is what they do—that was good enough for me.

AH: *So what became of Jack Armstrong?*

Wildey: I never heard again about the *Jack Armstrong* thing. My assumption—and it has proved out, obviously—is that they had a product that they felt would work and just didn't need *Jack Armstrong*. Why did they have to pay for *Jack Armstrong*? Most of the time, now, these studios license characters, by the way. They don't create their own product, although they'd *like* to create their own product.

I was a model man and storyboard man on *Mr. T*. There's a character that licenses out. They pay Mr. T for the licensing. And the same thing with *Rambo*, which they're doing now. Actually, I think I could've made 65 half-hour *Rambo* pictures that would've had some entertainment plus sell toys. But I just couldn't see 65 half-hours of Rambo blowing people away with his machine gun.

AH: *Where did the name Jonny Quest come from?*

Wildey: I can give you the dope on all the names. I originally named the show *The Saga of Chip Balloo*. It was a working title. I wasn't really serious, but that was it for the beginning.

As everybody in the illustrative cartoon business has done, I once tried an automobile comic strip. Because this whole country runs on the automobile economy, right? I know at least five other cartoonists—I can't name them all any more, but I think they include Leonard Starr, Mel Kiefer, Frank Frazetta—who all tried something with an automotive background. In my case, my guy was sort of an automobile designer. He raced cars. He had this glamorous European background, and raced on American tracks. I called him Stretch Bannon. I liked the name Stretch Bannon. Then, later on, I tried another strip about a writer-artist team that traveled the world getting into adventures. The name was Race Dunhill. So I put the Race and the Bannon together and that's where Race Bannon came from.

We started to think about names and got serious. So, I thought, where do you get names? The L.A. phone book. Went through the L.A. phone book and finally Quest hit me. "Quest" has an adventure sound to it.

I'll tell ya something that hasn't been said before. Screen Gems backed this series. They were a partner with Hanna-Barbera financially. I didn't know they were going to get into it creatively, but once the deal was set a guy came over from Screen Gems and proceeded to tell me his idea of how *Jonny Quest* was going to work. I'm not sure whether this was a suggestion or an order or whatever, but I just simply flipped out. I could not believe it, after all this work had gone into it. This guy had ideas like: "Okay, they're trapped down in this hole, see. It's a hundred feet deep." I was following him, so far: place your character in jeopardy and get him out. This guy says, "Jon-

Although Wildey doesn't think JONNY QUEST needed to show who Jonny's mother was, the second issue of the Comico comic (drawn by Wendy Pini and Joe Staton) will do just that.

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ny reaches in his pocket and takes out this little ladder, see, and unreels it and they all run up the ladder." [*laughs*] Then he says, "By the way, I like the name Race but I don't like Quest. Let's call the show Race Chase." I just couldn't believe it. Barbera's in the office and I used every four letter word that I ever thought possible about his ideas. I figured this is about the time I'm gonna get canned. Anyway, somehow it worked out.

AH: *Screen Gems eventually backed off or this guy came around . . . ?*

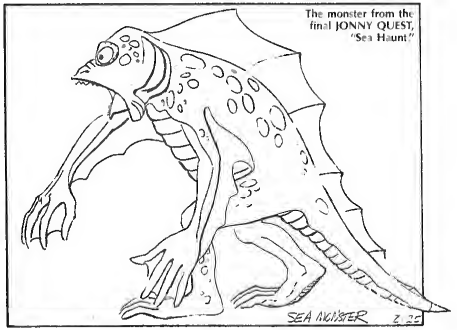
Wildey: I don't recall exactly. Somehow this meeting, if you can call it that, ended. I don't believe anybody ever mentioned this again. I'm sure I didn't bring it up. We'd get into howling, screaming matches later on, but that was just general creative things where people don't agree. But this thing was totally out of the blue. I had no idea anybody would take this thing and change it. Maybe the guy wasn't serious. To this day, I'm not sure what the hell his motivation was. That's one of the things I had forgotten about until discussing it with you. It's amazing how your memory gets jogged.

At that time, by the way, John Kennedy was assassinated. As the show goes into New York—selling the show and working out the contracts and whatnot. So there was a couple of weeks hold up before we really got back on track again.

So, I pulled "Quest" out of the L.A. phone book. And Joe contributed Jonny without the "h"—in other words, Jonathan. I liked that. It worked well in the title: the letters kind of came together. And that was acceptable to all hands.

The monsters that were appearing in the show were largely, at the beginning, due to me, thinking, "Well, maybe we can pump this thing up." And monsters are okay but I still wanted monsters that had some sort of Machiavellian hand behind them or somewhere there's a greater gain on the part of the villain. The Dr. Zin thing was always kind of a cheap shot in a way because comic books for thousands of centuries had the mad guy that wants to control the world. Yet, it's still not all that totally unbelievable to me, even now. Because there are still people out there some place that want to do that. So I felt, okay, it's a little weak but I think by and large it oughta play if we don't milk it to death.

I felt we did that with the dog. We milked the dog too much. Once you use an easy ploy, one writer sees the other writer's stuff and says "He did it. Why can't I do it?" And then you'd get innumerable scripts where the dog gets into trouble, the kid tries to save the dog and we're back on the same number again. So, I would put in monsters there and then I realized we were getting awfully heavy on monsters. We can't make each show nothing but a monster. I wanted a little love interest so I finally got Race to kiss the girl in one. I liked that one too, because the animator came down and said, "I'm not sure how we're going to do this." [*laughs*] So I made the drawings.



The monster from the final JONNY QUEST, "Sea Haunt."

AH: *With Hanna-Barbera doing two shows that were so different in style, what was it like working with the animators? There had to have been some carry-over, the guys had to be working on more than one show.*

Wildey: As I said, that was the tough part in the beginning. It was not only with the animation, it was with the music and it was with the writing. Everything had to be coordinated. We would get a script in where the writer, who had written many live-actions, now thinks he's writing for a cartoon studio. So he changes his style of writing. One guy came in with a sequence with Jonny Quest and his jet-powered swim fins. [*laughs*] I looked at it and he says, "Well, isn't that the type of thing you're doing? You went into this thing with the hovercraft . . ." I said yes, but jet-powered swim fins is beyond the line. It's unacceptable. you can't do that. I took the guy's idea and incorporated it into hydrofoil water skis. I'm not sure whether or not it would work, but somehow, to me, it was believable, whereas jet-powered swim fins were not. It's that line where you say no. Then another guy came in and said, "We've got this jungle thing going and they're out there searching for this lost city with the vines—I've got a great gimmick for how they find the place. I said, "What's that?" He said, "The bird comes down. A talking bird." And the dialogue he had written for the script was, "Come this way, fellow adventurers. This is the way to the lost city." This is said by the bird [*laughs*]. Again, this is beyond the line. I will not accept a talking bird. Tweety and Sylvester, all these cartoons, they talk and the audience accepts 'em. In this kind of show, the audience will not accept it. That's all. Therefore you draw the line.

So I lived in fear of scripts—once the show starts and the machine starts running, oh, that stuff piles up. And everybody's hurrying. You've gotta make airdates and the pressure's on. A couple of these scripts I'm not gonna see and they're gonna go through and boy are we gonna be in trouble. Because I've got a whole realistic adventure attitude. And all of a sudden in comes something that's incongruous, that again back to my eight-year old kid sitting there and the kid says, "Bullshit" and tunes into an *I Love Lucy* re-run.

AH: *Did any of the scripts get through that bothered you?*

Wildey: Lots of 'em. Lots of 'em. But in the main the writing was first class, compared to anything else I've ever worked on. With the exception of *Planet of the Apes*, where I thought the writing was good. And I've gotta tell you that the best writing was done by the network guy that bought the show. He would write the stuff after a while. We had a problem on *Planet of the Apes* with a writer the studio owner had made a deal with and given seven scripts. In writing, that he could do. As it turns out, once the network guy felt that he could write this stuff and get it back to me faster than have the writer pound out something else he didn't like, he did it. In many cases it worked fine. It was one of those things that isn't good, because you've got a producer . . . Of course, you've got a producer

who's already laid out the money for these scripts and he isn't about to say forget it, rewrite 'em. He wants his money's worth.

AH: *On Quest, the Bandit sequences often seemed to have been done separately from the rest of the show.*

Wildey: One thing I stress highly when I'm working with board people, people who do boards with me, is that it's an acceptably contrived motion picture illusion to do things in cutaways. Therefore, in the Bandit sequences, as much as possible, after a quick shot of Bandit in the group, in someone's arms or in his pocket, I would then cut away to a line of dialogue said by someone else, and then when we got back to Bandit, Bandit was no longer with the group, he was by himself. The Bandit stuff was shot separately.

I can give you a scene in a show, my favorite show, "Shadow of the Condor." Bandit's running along in this courtyard, and the condor swoops down and picks him up and drops him into a pond. This is easily handled by the cartoon guys, the guys who can draw funny dogs, because it's Bandit, he's in motion, and there's no one else in the scene. If any so-called "funny-dog" type artist had trouble with the condor, then one of the layout artists, who can draw realistically, would work that condor, we could bring him down on a vertical panel, and the dog would take care of itself.

I was working on titles that I wanted to use as main titles, and one thing and another happened, various pressures from all sides, long hours, the thing just fell through, so I guess the animation department selected stock animation and included them in those titles—where they're riding the plane and Jonny turns his head and the dog turns his head and someone else does something else, which I didn't like at all. That was stock at the time and they used it. I didn't care for that. But it was a title, it was put together, it was there, and they used it. Now the end titles, which were taken out of the *Jack Armstrong* footage we had, seemed okay, it seemed a little more in line with adventure thinking, let's say, than the other. But Bandit was included, by the way, in those titles, he was on somebody's lap.

AH: *I think he was just sitting there looking out the window.*

Wildey: Yeah. It would work. It didn't work all that well, but I'd use a cutaway at all times.

The realistic stuff was a little tougher, even when Irv started on the thing. The sequence on the Sargasso Sea, as they rose up out of the water, I noticed that the heads were too big, almost like Flintstone things. So I said, "Look, Irv," and I drew the water line and then drew the rest of the bodies to fit the heads that he had animated and then it worked. It just gets real tough to explain in the beginning.

AH: *I also understand that some of the guys that you had working on Quest were hired over to do things like celebrity faces for The Flintstones, like Ann-Margret?*

Wildey: Just me, as far as I know, and I just did Ann-Margret. They came up with this thing about Ann-Margret kicking off the new *Flintstones* series, singing a lullaby to the Flintstones' baby. So working from stills of Ann-Margret—I got several different poses, a complete head turnaround—that I could handle. But I couldn't handle the rest of it to save my life, because it was a big head, little body, Flintstones style, and this baby in her arms. I labored over that thing, I spent eight or nine hours just trying to put the baby into her arms, but every time I made it look like it was real, and the arms, everything didn't work. So I finally took the Ann-Margret head, dropped a little square in with a pencil, wrote "baby" on it, and handed her off. I believe, to that same Dick Bickerbach, who managed to handle it fine. So they incorporated my artwork on the head and some other guy handled that whole other thing.

The reverse was true with *Jonny Quest*. These guys were used to drawing cartoon type characters, and they'd come in and they were at a loss. They couldn't handle adventure stuff. Boy, did I get calls at night! From guys who somehow thought that they were failures simply because they couldn't handle something like this, which of course was crazy, because I hastened to tell them that. "Look, pal. I tried. I gave it my best shot, and I didn't know what the hell to do." They once assigned me this whole sequence, and I sat down and I couldn't handle it. Finally, I just wrote "I cannot handle this" on the drawings, in large black thick letters done with felt tip pen, and signed my name. A reasonably well-drawn face, in illustration style, no problem.

But these guys would keep saying "I'm not really that much up on anatomy. I haven't had anatomy in quite a while. I can't seem to handle

I mean, the artwork doesn't look right." And I'd look at it and say, "Yeah, it sure doesn't look right. It doesn't work." In the beginning I was the only straight man in the entire organization that could draw a reasonably decent looking human figure. Then as we added to them, the heavy hitters came in.

AH: *Warren [Tufts] and Alex [Toth].*

Wildey: Warren and Alex, people of their stripe, there was no problem. You could get a group scene of seven people sitting around an office at an angle with props and the whole thing and it would work out beautifully.

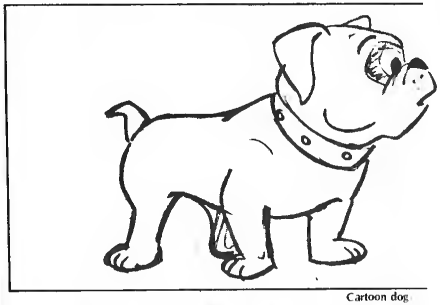
AH: (going through artwork): Is this the monkey that was intended to be the pet?

Wildey: No, this is a cartoon monkey, unacceptable. See the one I gave you? That's a real monkey. You dig? The cartoon monkey was done presumably for a show. There's no show number on it and it wasn't used, so it was evidently not in a show. It was one of those that was prepped and not used.

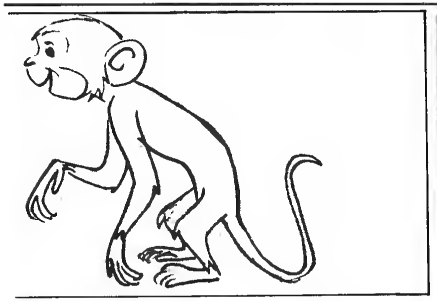
AH: *You told me you used rotoscoping on the credits for Quest. Did you actually wind up using rotoscoping in the show itself?*

Wildey: Yes, there was a little. We took the smallest guy in the studio, whose name I won't mention, and put him on a treadmill and ran him. It was in the titles. When people are running through the jungle with the drums and the jazz theme.

AH: *The music in Quest was very distinctive.*



Cartoon dog



and cartoon monkey.

Wildey: It was excellent. The music to me is most important. All cartoon or animated adventure shows have wall-to-wall music—the music never stops. What I wanted for the *Jonny Quest* theme music to do was the same job that other shows music had done. On *Maverick*, *77 Sunset Strip* and on and on, you could remember the music. When you heard that music it signaled when the show was going on the air. What I wanted was heavy drums—jazz drums. They put out a record, by the way, "The jazz theme from Jonny Quest." Hoyt Curtin was the musical director and did a fine job.

Music was a big problem at the beginning, though. I was doing an exciting dramatic show and would see some of the footage that was shot and then the music would come in a little like Little Red Riding Hood—very innocuous music. I had a scene where Jonny comes up out of cabin on an old ship and is standing there with his back to the audience and this huge hand comes onto the foreground and grabs the wood and water drips down off the hand

and the music was wimpy instead of having a sting. The music can make a scene or kill it. But we got that straightened out. This was drama so we hit the drama. If we had Bandit playing with a bone in the desert the other music worked fine. But the "cues" were there and once the music cutter understood it, we got it worked out, just like the layout guys understood how important it was to have dramatic poses of people.

AH: *Did someone compose new music every week for the show?*

Wildey: No, the way it works is that the composer composes a song. He'll compose an original—however long he wants it to run. Then he will, out of his own composition, furnish the producer with "cues," which are bars of music—some quiet, some strong—so that the music cutter can take what he thinks is appropriate for the scene and drop that onto the track.

AH: *If you ask anybody about Jonny Quest, the one everyone remembers, the pterodactyl, or rather the pteranodon, and the guy in the wheelchair.*

Wildey: I don't know, every time I get into this stuff, they all mention another one.

AH: *Really? Maybe the ones people remember are the ones that the stations showed the most in syndication. Was it the studio's idea, or was it in your contract—yours is the only name that appears as a signature in the final credits.*

Wildey: See, I came out of comic strips, and you put bylines on them. My assumption was that this was the way television worked. I went in and talked to them, and they didn't like that idea nohow! So we went around and around, and finally they said, "What sort of a credit are you looking for?," and I said, "Program created by." All of a sudden, it was, "You didn't create this show,' and we finally arrived on 'Based on an idea created by" and that was my credit. Barbera had seen some of the comic strips and figured maybe it would be nice if I put it in natural byline form and that's where it wound up.

At least one third of the comic books that I've done—probably more—I never signed. First of all, actually, I was a little ashamed of working in the business. I thought it was a crummy, trashy, non-literate business.

AH: *Sometimes it is.*

Wildey: Well, I felt that way when I was working in it. If I were at a cocktail party or something and some guy would say, "What do you do?" I would make up some story but I would not tell him I did comic books.

Later on, when I developed characters of my own—the first one was the Outlaw Kid. I didn't create the Outlaw Kid in the sense that some guy hadn't written the script. I think Stan Lee wrote it, and yet it was just a thing where they said, "Here's the Outlaw Kid," it didn't describe who he was or anything, and the writing was terrible. And all I did was take every cornball singing cowboy movie that I'd ever seen and take one piece of equipment off each of these cowboys and put them on the guy. So I took Roy Rogers' pants, those tight circus pants with the thing down the side, and those hand-tooled cowboy boots that Powell wore, then I put a football jersey on him with wide shoulders, and I can't remember the guy who always wore the black hat, and then I added the poncho and the hatband, and I gave him the fancy flashy gunbelt with all the carving on it [laughs] because I didn't think that thing was going to last. I did "The Outlaw Kid" for three years, one a month. And of course when I came into other stuff like "Eddie Race" and "Ambler" and "Rio," those were all mine, no writer, just mine.

That kind of a setup exists all over. If a writer comes in and says "We've got a guy named *Tank Zilch*, there's my idea," it's written already. Tank Zilch, right? But the artist, the designer that gets it, works weeks, maybe, and comes up with something which then is called "Tank Zilch." The writer never said, "Well, he's got a big square head and he wears plaid suits and he's got six toes sticking out . . ." He doesn't do that. The writer just says, "Tank Zilch, he's a big rugged character," and then the guy takes it from there. And all of a sudden, the writer "created" this.

Which gets you into the Jack Kirby thing. He's got a legit gripe. Okay, sure, some writer Stan Lee says this character jumps all over buildings, or he smashes through walls, that's it, and then Kirby comes up with this whole visual thing. Did he create it or not? It's a chicken-or-egg thing.

You would think that somehow today's writers would look at stuff like "The Outlaw Kid," some of this really terribly-written stuff, and improve it. And yet, I read this stuff in the comic books today, and I can't see a damn improvement! I don't get that. Could you explain that?

AH: *The only way I can explain it is that the audience hasn't changed and all of the people that are behind the money are saying, "Well, this is what the kids have always liked, this is what we have to give them or we'll go broke."*

Wildey: What I question is, "What the kids have always liked."

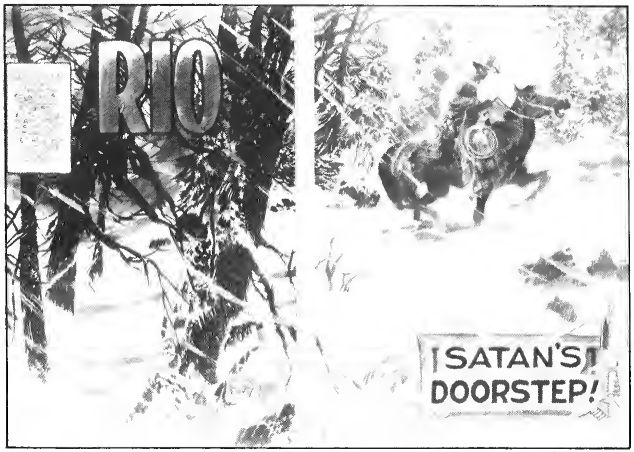
AH: *I agree a hundred percent. There's one question I wanted to ask you. Was there ever any discussion about the violence in Jonny Quest, at the time or later?*

Wildey: Later, of course. Later, it was a sleet storm. At the time, I've gotta

1985 Marvel Comics Group

1975 Seaboard Publications

Clockwise from top: From the '50s, THE OUTLAW KID, written by Stan Lee; from the '70s, "Kid Cody," published by Atlas; Wildey's latest, "Rio," published in ECLIPSE MAGAZINE; and "Eddie Race," a detective strip done for the short-lived SOJOURN.



1984 Doug Wildey

1977 Doug Wildey

say—actually, I left the *Jonny Quest* show before the show was completed. Throughout this industry I've been outright fired at least five times by various people, and inevitably called back by the same people. And I've resigned formally in writing four times, and just walked the hell out and quit five times. I don't by any means hold the record for this sort of thing.

The first eight or ten shows, I was so heavily involved in it I wouldn't even think of someone saying, "Hey, isn't this too violent?" At that time there was no talk on the part of any network person. I had never actually met a network person during that show.

AH: *Nobody from ABC came down to talk to you?*

Wildey: Now, you've got to remember that I came in out of the comic strips. I was in an animation studio and felt, "This is my bag, this is what I do. I tell stories in pictures; sometimes the pictures move, sometimes they stand still, but there's no difference in my book."

They had a guy there, a studio publicity flack, and most of the time he was on the phone—it seemed like the phone grew out of the guy's ear. He wore blue suede shoes and they were always up on his desk when you passed his office, that was his pose. Leaned back in his chair, phone glued to his ear, blue suede shoes up on the desk. It never occurred to me to ask who the guy was or anything. I didn't know what his function was.

But one day he came in, with his cigar, into my office, and self-importantly said, "Wear a suit and tie tomorrow." I said, "My first question is, Who are you?" He said, "Look, I handle all of the worldwide publicity for Hanna-Barbera studios and its products" and he really did a number to impress. I was impressed, I was. I was the new boy here, I didn't know, maybe this was the way things were done. "The bureau chief from *Life* magazine is coming out tomorrow to interview you and we're going to set aside the afternoon to see that they get plenty of material for *Life* magazine." Would you believe I bought this? "*Life* magazine?!" "Yeah, you know, this is a whole new process. What do you call this process, Doug?" I said, "What do you mean, what process?" "Well, we've got to have a name for this. What can we call it? Super-vision?" They've got to have a name for animation, now, for this guy, ostensibly from *Life* magazine. I said, "Gee, I don't know." "Write down a few suggestions for me, I've gotta make phone calls" and he left. This is going to warrant seven pages in *Life* magazine, right [*laughs*]?

We were going to have illustrations. He says, "What we're going to do, you know that thing you're working on now"—the frogman sequence—"we can set up a tank, see, fill it with water, have all these divers go down there, and you can sit there and draw their pictures." And I said, "I don't think these guys are going to buy that. I came out of the newspapers, and these are very hardbitten guys, they don't buy that kind of stuff. Let me get this straight, we're going to have a tank . . ." "Yeah, yeah, we get the guy in a frog mask, see, and then we get the *Life* photographer and you can sit there like they're posing, see." And I said, "I've got to tell you, I don't want to get in trouble here or anything, but I think this is the worst idea I've ever heard in my life."

AH: *[Laughs]*

Wilde: And he says, "Well, Jeez, you don't have to get uppity about it." And then he started to back up and I realized that whoever this guy is, this wasn't going to get crucial. So we came up with "Marvelmation" and a couple of other stupid names, you know, a "brand-new process developed by Hanna-Barbera." It's not a new process, it was done much better by other studios. Max Fleischer in the '30s, with his rotoscope and that type of thing, but this guy was trying to get an "angle." He talked like a reporter in old Warner Bros. pictures. The only thing he didn't wear was the hat band with the press card stuck in it.

By the way, three weeks later, he was gone. Maybe someone caught on to him. I don't know. He just kind of disappeared. All 4' 11" of him, with the blue suede shoes. But I, like a jerk, got the suit and tie, came in, and I'm waiting for the *Life* guy to show up. No *Life* guy showed up. Neither did the guy with the blue suede shoes! He had other business that day. And that was the end of it.

AH: *Which is your favorite* Jonny Quest *show?*

Wildey: My own particular show, the one that I like the best, not just because I wrote it or get a split-screen credit on it, was the "Shadow of the Condor," about a Nazi, an ex-World War I pilot. As you know, we did a lot of Nazis in *Jonny Quest*. Nazis make great heavies, let's face it, that's what they are there for.

I went into that heavily only because Warren Tufts was into airplanes—as a matter of fact, that's what killed him. He was building his own airplane, he got in it, the wind turned it over, smacked him against a rock and he died. On a few occasions, he would say, "Hey, let's go over to my yard and work on the plane." He was always building this plane in his backyard. First of all, I don't like physical work of that type and secondly I had better things to do so I never did help him build his airplane. Anyway, he was well into airplanes he worked with Irv Spence and Lefty Callahan, two of the animators on the thing. Warren basically taught them how to fly airplanes just on that one episode and I designed characters—a manservant named Julio and the German guy, and they were supposed to put on this exhibition of flying and . . .

AH: *And it turned into a dogfight right?*

Wildey: Except that Race's guns were firing blanks. That was my big "stinger" there. I really got into that one. I wrote a little bit more than actually appeared in the show. I had this guy who had looted part of Europe and had paintings and jewelry up in the thing, just to give it a little more bulk of a story. As it turned out it worked pretty well, and I think that's probably my favorite show. I probably had more into it writing-wise than some of the others. I was instrumental in 10 or 12 of them.

You know, the control of a show like this is very, very important. Now they don't look at it that way. Now they're mostly toy shows and they're done to promote products and so forth and nobody is really super interested in story or entertainment all that much, I don't think. ●

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BLACK ORCHID

By David H. Smith

"She wouldn't need to be a bird without a wing or be a servant to a telephone ring. She could be moody, dramatic as a play or be evasive as a shadow in the shade."

—*KING CRIMSON*
"Man With an Open Heart"
from the LP
Three of a Perfect Pair

A consensus among taxonomists is held that the orchid is the most beautiful, as well as the largest, family of flowering plants. Their opinions conflict, however, as to number of different species, with the reports vouchsafing 6000 to upwards of 35,000.

With so many to choose from, it is peculiar the genus *Orchidaceae* has not flourished in comics as well, though infrequent cases do blossom. Fans of Dale Messick's *Brenda Starr* strip fretted for years whether the plucky reporter's betrothed could maintain for medicinal purposes a steady supply of the rare black orchid.

Still more elusive has been the Black Orchid herself, a heroine whose career has fought to germinate in the hearts of DC readers for years, and has recently bloomed again from the mulch of that company's Crisis.

She is as rare and unique in the world of superheroes as is her namesake in the world of flora. Without the commonplace trappings of secret identity, origin, or hometown base of operations. The Black Orchid is as much a mystery to readers and those she aids as she is to those she detests; but of herself, she is supremely confident.

Read on, and learn of her heroism.

Not all shady politics took place in big city boardrooms or Washington cloisters, as District Attorney Ken Ransom found out when he assumed the position left vacant after his brother's suspicious demise. His efforts to publicly disclose the mayor's culpability of graft had only, like his sibling before him, yielded him the cliched "one way trip" by the chief magistrate's cronies.

Bound and unconscious, the young lawman did not see the figure swoop out of the rainy night to stop the car — by hefting it high into the dark sky, pitching the criminals out the doors to the mud and wet below.

Ransom, upon regaining his senses, was astonished to see his savior in action. A beautiful girl, clad in lavender tights, was single-handedly routing the villains, shrugging off their gunfire, and crisscrossing the heavens with a diaphanous cape billowing behind her like the petals of an enormous orchid.

The Black Orchid made this debut in *Adventure* #428, created and written by Sugar-n-Spike's Sheldon Mayer and drawn by Tony DeZuniga. The title had been fizzling for some time, with features coming and going almost as fast as the book's bi-monthly status would allow. An attempt in the issues immediately prior to the Black Orchid's premiere to have the book live up to its title, with the nonsuperheroic exploits of The Adventurers Club and Captain Fear, had left *Adventure* on the brink of cancellation. The Legion Of Super-Heroes and Supergirl had both found success in those pages, it was reasoned. A restoration of superheroes to the comic was inevitable.

All art on pp. 49-50 © 1986 DC Comics Inc.

and the Black Orchid was indeed a triumphant return.

The remainder of this August 1973 issue lay the foundation for what would fast become the Black Orchid formula. The heroine took the hapless D.A. to his sister-in-law's home for medical attention, disappearing just before the emergence of the young widow, and leaving only a fragrant orchid as evidence of her ever being there at all.

Ken thought he smelled the heroine's fragrance again as his sister-in-law and her maid tended his wounds, causing him to suspect his brother's beautiful wife of knowing more than she professed. Meeting his contact at a hotel room later, the mayor's men were waiting as well, and it was again up to the Black Orchid to pull his fat from the fire.

His suspicions regarding his sister-in-law were proven unfounded at the end, as a latex mask and wig were found in the maid's quarters. This was to be the Black Orchid's modus operandi throughout her career—an assumption of an identity to come in contact with the victim of some villainy or, more often the case, to infiltrate the evildoer's inner circle. Her masquerade would be revealed only at the end, the criminals in custody, and her signature flower in evidence for the authorities to puzzle over.

Her appearances in *Adventure* were limited to a three-issue tryout, and in the remaining two, Mayer and DeZuniga pulled out all the stops, depicting the heroine in as wide a range of situations as possible in the limited space available to them. From her debut in the open countryside, she went out to sea to thwart a playboy's small-scale pirating operation, redeeming a ship's captain's honor at the same time; the Black Orchid returned to dry land in #430 and the inner city for her last *Adventure*, as she subverted a criminal moneylender by surreptitiously impersonating employees of the man's own private nightclub.

Reader reaction to the Black Orchid, as evidenced by letters pages several issues later, indicated strong support. In a remarkably short time, demands for the superpowerful, enigmatic heroine burgeoned to the point where, as a backup series, she was seen as a sales booster for the foundering *Phantom Stranger*, beginning with issue #31. She appeared intermittently until the title's cancellation ten issues later.

Black Orchid's second debut was handled by the same team that handled her before; it was intimated the heroine had known the confines of imprisonment in #32 as she cleared her own reputation from the damage dealt it by an imitator who committed crimes in a similar costume. This, besides an earlier, offhanded mention that *Adventure* #428 had indeed been her crimefighting debut, were up to then the only clues given of the superheroine's background.

Fantastic aspects of the Black Orchid's capabilities were shown in a two-part story beginning in *Phantom Stranger* #35. Besides her talent for mimickry, she now could create robots to assume other identities, and inexplicably used X-rays to reprogram a computer being used to plot "perfect crimes." All of this smacked a little too close to the abilities of a certain Kryptonian, who has been imitated more than enough over the years, and never again were either of these skills utilized.

Surely the magnum opus of the Black Orchid's irregular career came with a four-part story begun in #38. Artist Fred Carillo found himself doing double duty now, handling chores on both the title feature and the enigmatic heroine's backup series, and his efforts were more than adequate.

A young heiress, bored with her life as a "race-car driver, stunt pilot, and member of the international jet set," was envious of the Black Orchid. Wistful to the point of admiring herself in a facsimile of a Black Orchid costume, Ronne Kuhn was delirious with joy when she was visited by the Black Orchid herself.

The mystery woman took young Ronne aloft to a mountaintop hiding place where the bewildered but overjoyed heiress met four other young women each dressed in the unique lavender costume. The leader revealed they were the Legion of the Black Orchid. Between them—chemist, physicist, gymnast, criminologist, and psychologist—they had created the skills and abilities of the superheroine, and each undertook the role when her specialty was called for. A tour of their headquarters, with demonstrations of their powers and aptitudes, cemented the reality of it all in Ronne's mind.

My naivete might be showing, but all this seemed perfectly reasonable to me as I read it. It all seemed so logical and pat when in the last panel of issue #39, it was revealed that it had all been an intricate plan to dupe the young woman. These five impostors saw through Ronne the key to inside information on the World Bank security.

It is probably a moot point here to reveal these impostors' incredibly complex plan was finally undone by the genuine article in the end, leaving an embarrassed Ronne alone to bemoan her fate. What does bear telling are the clues given in this storyline regarding the Black Orchid's background and motivation. Early on, she showed dismay at some criminals' dismissal of her "just because (she was) a woman," a personality trait first used and then abused by Marvel to the point of overkill in the 1970s. Later, the heroine showed a trace of wishful thinking herself when she overdid a rescue effort in the hope a member of the Justice League was nearby scouting recruits for the super-team.

Afterwards, the saga of the Black Orchid lay inert for more than four years until being resumed in, of all places, *The Super Friends* #31. Continuity was perfectly intact as a member of that five-woman gang sought revenge on the Black Orchid for her interference months earlier. The criminal, noting the similarities between her nemesis and Superman, schemed to lure them both to a Kryptonite deathtrap, which, by sleight-of-hand and identity, the Black Orchid was able to undo before arrival of the rest of the heroes.

Proving herself immune to the effects of the alien rock, Black Orchid confirmed her birthplanet to be Earth to the mystified Man of Steel, and promptly darted off for another career hiatus.

Elegantly limned by Terry Austin, the Black Orchid entry in the third "volume" of *The Definitive Directory of the DC Universe* shed no new light on the character, but paved the way for her next, and to date last, appearance. The first *Blue Devil Annual*, subtitled "Summer Fun," brought the heroine into contact with a number of DC's more offbeat characters in a struggle against the reincarnation of a demonic adversary of the headliner, and even had her untold origin presupposed in two versions, by the Phantom Stranger himself and *Doorway To Nightmare*'s Madame Xanadu. Neither of these possibilities was confirmed by the mystery woman herself—nor were they denied, for that matter. The origins were derivative parodies of those of Spider-Man and Daredevil, with the substitution of orchids wherever radioactive spiders or cannisters were involved.

For the rest of the issue, though, the Black Orchid acquitted herself rather nicely, despite being horribly miscolored and recostumed on the cover. She never mocked herself, nor were her abilities made light of, as were The Demon's or the Phantom Stranger's. Too, her voice was equally adamant in the last page communal veto of forming another team of heroes, and for that I think we can be grateful. The woman does work best alone.

In summary, one might wish more was available on the Black Orchid, if only for the answers of her being Handled properly and with as much care as she has been in the past, the bloom of success may not be as elusive for the character herself. After all, the seeds have already been planted. ●

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COMICS IN REVIEW

R.A. JONES

IS THERE HOPE?

HEROES AGAINST HUNGER
written and illustrated by Various
DC Comics
$1.50

DC Comics' *Heroes Against Hunger* is a guaranteed Collectors Item. It's bound to increase tremendously in value within a matter of weeks. For that reason, I strongly suggest that you buy multiple copies.

Are they gone now? Good. In case you didn't know it, the above paragraph was written for the benefit of those speculators who have insisted on turning the comics field into a commodity exchange. I just figured that, for a change, they might as well spend their bucks helping a worthy cause.

Art by Joe Brozowski and Gray Morrow

The sad thing is that there is more than a grain of truth in my mile high prediction. Within a month of the release of Marvel's similar *Heroes For Hope* book, I was seeing copies in back-issue bins sporting five dollar price tags.

If greed was edible, we'd all feast.

As with Marvel's effort, there is no question that I will recommend you buy this book. The cause it serves is eminently deserving. As before, though, I will also examine how well the book works.

It begins with Superman attempting to restore the depleted and eroded topsoil of parched Ethiopia. It is a massive undertaking which, even for the Man of Tomorrow, will require "twenty years, give or take" to be completed.

The task is made even more formidable by the fact that someone is bent on sabotaging Superman's efforts. Likewise, this same mystery person has been destroying planes carrying much-needed food to the starving natives. Since some of these mercy missions are subsidized by the Wayne Foundation, it is inevitable that the Batman becomes personally involved.

Superman wants to stop the saboteur but, more importantly, he wants to end the crisis in Africa. The quickest, surest way to do this is to enlist the aid of the villainous Lex Luthor, who has developed a formula for growing larger-than-normal crops at record speed.

Realizing that Luthor would never agree to help him, Superman asks Batman to intercede on his behalf. This proves to be relatively easy, as Luthor cannot resist the opportunity to succeed where Superman has failed.

Before Luthor's solution can be attempted, it proves necessary to defeat the shadowy saboteur—a hulking alien known only as the Master. Since despair and suffering increase his power, he has no desire to see the Ethiopian crisis averted.

The master is overcome, of course, at the conclusion of a very protracted battle. Luthor is then free to spray his plant growth solution over the countryside. Unfortunately, the formula—which was originally designed for use on the planet Lexor—has no effect on earthen soil.

At that point, a Peace Corps volunteer named Lee Ann Layton—who serves as the book's Greek

Art by Curt Swan and John Byrne

Chorus-cum-social conscience—steps in to explain that it will take more than three superbeings to end this crisis. Only the combined efforts of all mankind will suffice to bring an end to the suffering. Still, she takes hope from the knowledge that Superman and Batman will continue their efforts, and that—with our assistance—the suffering will end.

It is unavoidable, and not wholly undesirable that comparisons will be made between this book and the earlier Marvel effort. On the artistic side of the ledger, I would have to give Marvel the edge (while bearing in mind that I am judging DC's offering solely on the basis of a photostat copy).

By and large, Marvel had the advantage of stronger pencillers, and teamed them with more compatible inkers. Yet *Heroes Against Hunger* does present some interesting combinations. Joe Brozowski and Gray Morrow team to portray the most realistic-looking Batman ever (complete with eyes showing through his mask); and while this largely serves only to prove that you don't want completely realistic art on the character, it is a nice change of pace.

Jeff Jones's inks over Barry Windsor-Smith's pencils were overly dark and splotchy, but the two did manage to create the book's one truly powerful and moving scene—effectively driving home the true horror of starvation. For those who care, John Byrne makes his DC debut (sort of) by inking Curt Swan's pencils.

In terms of story, my nod goes to DC, if for no other reason than that it is a far more upbeat and hopeful tale. With one notable exception, the two dozen writers involved in the scripting were able to carry on the storytelling process smoothly and effectively. The one glaring exception was, rather surprisingly, Marv Wolfman, who appears not to have read the segment of the story immediately preceding his own.

Robert Loren Fleming (in one of the better written sequences) has Luthor telling Batman he wants no credit for giving his aid since he is doing it to humiliate Superman, rather than out of love for the Earth. The very next page, Marv has Luthor declare he wants the news of his success presented "in neon letters on Metropolis Tower."

The somewhat sanctimonious Lee Ann Layton grew quickly tiring, even though her appearances were brief. What is truly amazing is that the worst bit of scripting came from the man who is arguably the best writer of the lot—horror great Robert Bloch, of *Psycho* fame. It seems obvious from his dialogue that Bloch's last encounter with Batman came during the camp days of the television series 20 years ago. I guess it simply goes to show that even the most talented of writers are not comfortable with all media.

A facet of the story that reflects current policy at DC proved to be as palatable to me here as it has elsewhere. This deals with the relationship between Superman and Batman.

With reservations, I had accepted the decision to break them up as a team in the final issue of *World's Finest* (in what was one of the clumsiest, most heavy-handed and contrived endings in recent memory). But the contempt with which they now hold each other rankles me—not just because I am an oldtimer, but because both heroes now seem to be completely out of character.

In general, I think the dissolution of their friendship reflects a terrible creative laziness. It was easier to split them apart than to develop a credible reason for their close ties. Their new status leaves a bad taste in my mouth.

I had another problem which hampered my enjoyment of the book: one which I hasten to add has nothing to do with the project itself, but rather with the time at which I read it.

Art by Barry Windsor-Smith and Jeff Jones.

The posturing politician America was foolish enough to reward with the highest office in the land has just decided to play a deadly game of one-upmanship in the Gulf of Sidra. Watching him court all-out war in this inconsequential body of water was depressing enough; listening to scores of Americans applauding as the body count mounted was even more disturbing.

Add to that the horrible, violent suppression of basic human rights and dignity throughout the world, and the fact that the Ethiopian government itself has seemingly chosen to use starvation as a tool of repression—and I'm afraid my hope for mankind is at a particularly low ebb at the moment.

Be that as it may, I still recommend that you support this effort to aid in famine relief. It is gratifying that so many people in the comics industry care so deeply.

And if even one innocent child is saved from the spectre of starvation, it will have been worth the effort.

TAKE TWO ASPIRIN

MYTHADVENTURES #9
written by ROBERT ASPRIN
pencilled by VALENTINO
inked by PAUL ABRAMS and ART THIBERT
edited by RICHARD PINI
WaRP Graphics
$1.50

Following the conclusion of their first harrowing adventure, the apprentice magician Skeeve and his demonic mentor Aahz have opened an inn and gone into business for themselves.

The first wayfarer to make use of their hospice is a rather grim editorial lookalike named Duke Pinchpint. He is a demanding guest, and Aahz is more than happy to accommodate him—since it is Skeeve who is required to do all the work. The prospect of winning the Duke's generous gratitude is sufficient to put Aahz on his obsequious best behavior.

As it turns out, Aahz has failed to take one very important fact into consideration. It seems that the king of Klah has decreed that members of nobility need not pay for lodging. Thus, all Aahz receives for Skeeve's trouble is a single coin by way of renumeration. Worse, the Duke recommends the inn to his friends, who descend on the establishment en masse.

The big news here for fans of *Mythadventures* is that the comics co-originator Phil Foglio has departed. If issue #9 is any indication, his exit has left the book weaker in both its visual and scripting departments.

Valentino has proven himself to be a fine cartoonist, and would sem to be well-suited for this series. His representation of Aahz is hewed very closely after that of Foglio, and he does a good job of capturing the demon's look of benign malevolence.

In every other way, however, he has failed to capture the full texture and flavor of his predecessor. One is tempted to say that Skeeve and the other characters look too much like those in *normalman*, but such an assessment would not be totally accurate. In many panels, his work resembles that of one of the lesser Archie pencillers. He does not convey the emotional nuances that Foglio was able to depict at no sacrifice to his humorous style. The team of inkers seems to further simplify what are already sparse pencils. Valentino's artwork here is just not funny.

Still, the weaknesses in the art would have proven to be minor faults had they been supported by a strong script. They weren't. Since Robert Asprin wrote the original novels upon which the comic series is based, he would seem to be the ideal choice to script the book. Perhaps this is an even more jarring and noticeable manifestation of the trouble Robert Bloch encountered in adapting his style to comics form in *Heroes Against Hunger*.

I have not read the original *Myth* books, but I assume Asprin must be a genuinely funny guy, else they would not enjoy such popularity. Yet in this story he seems to know only two humorous devices: having his characters scream and/or do a double-take. Had this been done on film, it might have worked; in comic book form it does not. It might also be possible that Asprin needs the longer form of the novel in order to fully develop his comedic characters and situations. Denied that luxury he falls back on tired conventions.

Indeed, the entire story resembles nothing so much as an old Porky Pig/Daffy Duck cartoon from the '40s. The only major difference is that the Warner Brothers cartoons were hilarious, while one must look high and low for the slightest laugh in this book. If you find one—you'll know why your friends accuse you of having no sense of humor.

After a sufficient period of adjustment by both the readers and the new creative team, it is possible that *Mythadventures* will bounce right back up to the high level of quality it maintained throughout Phil Foglio's tour of duty.

In the meantime, expect it to induce more headaches than bellylaffs.

1986 Aspelin and Valentino

WINGING IT

HAWKMAN #1
written by TONY ISABELLA
pencilled by RICHARD HOWELL
inked by DON HECK
colored by MICHELE WOLFMAN
edited by MIKE GOLD
DC Comics
75 cents

The planet Thanagar has invaded Earth. Not with bombs or blazing laser beams, but with subterfuge and a device which enables them to tap into any human mind. There are only two heroes on Earth who know that the invasion of Earth is underway: Hawkman and Hawkwoman. Despite the fact that they too are Thanagarians, they are determined to stop their brethren.

Such will not be easy in this Shadow War for their opponents are largely invisible to them. By the use of extortion, force and exploitation, the invaders have recruited certain humans to their cause.

One such ally is the Shadow Thief, an old nemesis of the Hawks. He engineers a jailbreak to draw the heroes out into the open—not to destroy them, but to offer them one last chance to join with their fellow Thanagarians in subjugating Earth. Because they are true heroes, Hawkman and Hawkwoman decline the offer.

Thus rebuked, the invaders continue with the next phase of their plan. They have in their control one Congresswoman Devino, a lady who aspires to the presidency of the United States. They intend to insure her victory.

They even have a plan to neutralize the threat posed by Hawkman and his wife, a scheme both simple and diabolic. They reveal to the newspapers that museum curators Carter and Shiera Hall are actually aliens who have been living in secret on Earth for several years. What trouble this revelation portends for the Hawks can only be imagined.

Except for the passage of several months' time, *Hawkman* #1 picks up right where the final issue of the *Shadow War of Hawkman* mini-series ended. It would have been nice if some sort of re-cap of events had been presented for new readers (though such may well be provided in the text page of the finished product). As is, the series works on the premise that most, if not all, of its readers are familiar with the background to the Shadow War.

Scripter Tony Isabella has given us a fairly standard superhero story: one that does not venture out of the bounds of the ordinary for such a book. Within those parameters, he has done a good, solid job—helping to produce a series that will doubtless turn a profit for DC, but not set the comics world afire.

There are some very nice touches to Tony's tale. As in the mini-series, he is at his best when depicting the home life of Carter and Shiera Hall. He has a firm grasp of what makes their relationship work, and a fine touch in delivering the light dialogue that makes their conversation the

most entertaining element of the book.

I also like the manner in which Isabella has chosen to have the Thanagarians wage their war against Earth. There is no gathered armada lurking in space, no bombastic battles of light and fury. It is a quiet war, one of stealth and subversion that makes it seem even dirtier and less honest.

This could also prove to be the book's downfall as well. Generally speaking, series based on elongated single points of conflict do not do well. There are exceptions to this rule, such as Sgt. Rock but its staying power probably comes in part from the fact that we all know how World War II ended. Such is not the case here (or, to use an earlier example, in Jack Kirby's *New Gods*). If the readers feel that the Shadow War will remain the dominant plot element of this series for months or even years, with no guarantee or resolution, they will soon begin to desert it in droves.

Turning to the visual side of the book, I was not expecting a great deal from this premiere issue. In most cases, Richard Howell has failed to impress me with his pencilling prowess. The knowledge that he would be inked by Don Heck did little to raise my expectations.

I was rather pleasantly surprised to find that the two of them meshed fairly well. I was especially impressed by Heck's inking. By toning down some of the excesses of his own style, he was able to complement rather than cripple Howell's yeoman-like artwork. There is room for improvement, but I happen to believe Heck to be one of those veterans who can still produce good work when properly motivated. We're certainly not talking of the level of quality achieved by a Kubert or a Murphy Anderson here, but Howell and Heck have contributed a creditable art job.

Such a description would seem to be applicable to the book as a whole. It is a well-done mid-level book. If you have little or no interest in super-heroes, then there is nothing here that would induce you to change your opinion, and you would be well advised to ignore it.

If costumed crimefighters stir your blood, however, it would not hurt to give *Hawkman* a try.

THE FAST LANE

LOIS LANE #1
written by MINDY NEWELL
illustrated by GRAY MORROW
colored by TATJANA WOOD
edited by ROBERT GREENBERGER
DC Comics
$2.00

Ace reporter Lois Lane is out for a night on the town when she spots several police cars heading for the riverfront. Her journalistic instincts kick in, and Lois dumps her disgruntled date, heading for what she feels will be an important story.

Police Inspector Henderson is already on the scene, waiting for his team of divers to retrieve an object from the river. Using that unique combination of charm and tenacity that helped win her a Pulitzer Prize, Lois convinces him to let her see what has been raised from the depths. She wishes she hadn't, for the mutilated mass had once been a living, breathing child.

And then.

I can't tell you what happens next. No, I'm not being coy. I simply have no idea how the story progresses from there. You see, DC only sent me a copy of the first 14 pages of this long-planned mini series. Why only 14 pages, you ask? Why not 12? Or 15? Or—why not the whole thing?

Good question. Maybe that's all they had on hand. Maybe they wanted to pique my curiosity, to leave me aching to see the rest of the story. Maybe they'd just as soon I didn't see the remainder of the tale. Maybe they simply wanted the shortest review this column has ever carried.

They got it.

And just to placate any ruffled sensibilities, let me assure one and all that I am painfully aware of the importance of the subject matter dealt with in this series. I fully intend to give the book serious, comprehensive appraisal it deserves, as soon as I have access to it in its entirety.

But—why 14 pages?

LOIS LANE #1: "Where's the rest of it?," cries our intrepid critic

ETERNAL VIGILANCE

WATCHMEN #1
written by ALAN MOORE
illustrated by DAVE GIBBONS
DC Comics
$1.50

The Comedian is dead.

At first it seemed to be a fairly routine homocide. Someone had broken into the apartment of Edward Blake and thrown him through a window. A grisly murder, but no more so than a dozen others that probably occurred in New York City that same night.

But Rorshach saw the difference: his face is hidden behind an ever-changing ink blot of a mask. His features are obscured, but his political and social philosophy is worn like a proud badge on his sleeve. That night he enters Edward Blake's apartment, finds the colorful costume hidden in the secret closet.

There's a hero-killer on the loose.

Only there are no costumed heroes anymore, except those in the employ of the government. The Keene Act of 1977 had seen to that. When it passed into law, the super team known as the Minutemen disbanded. Most of its members retired; a few went into government service. Only Rorshach remained a free agent, refusing to hang up his costume or to prostitute himself as a tool for some federal agency. He is obsessive, reactionary—those less kind would label him a neo-Nazi facist. Still, he takes it upon himself to track down his former teammates to warn them a killer may be stalking them.

And if they choose to ignore his warnings, chalking them up to the ramblings of a pathetic paranoid, well, he'd done his best. And he'll continue to do so, even if the cause be futile. For as long as evil exists it must be opposed by good men.

Watchmen is, for me, the most eagerly awaited series to come from DC Comics in 1986, more so even than *Dark Knight* or the new Superman. The series takes place on Earth, though it is an Earth not quite identical to our own. The first superficial evidence of this comes from the appearance of the automobiles, but it is in the panoply of newspaper headlines glimpsed throughout the story that the deeper differences unfold.

News that Vietnam has gained admittance to the Union as the 51st State. That America has sent troops into Afghanistan. That Congress has approved the construction of missile silos on the Moon. That the world stands on the brink of nuclear war.

It is not surprising that the most perceptive views of America often come from outside. We often delude ourselves with self-serving fantasies of being the bastion of liberty—the great wide hope for freedom throughout the world. We forget that, to others, we are merely one of two superpowers, who seem intent on flirting with total annihilation, unwilling partners engaged in a danse macabre, struggling for ideological supremacy of minds not ours to own. At times we need a less partial observer to grab us by the hair and hold a different mirror to our faces. One that may contain no more truth than our own self-images, but certainly contains no less.

Whether such is Alan Moore's intent, I have no idea. How the backdrop of impending war can connect with a single old hero remains a complete mystery to me. Yet with the planting of but a few clues and his usual insightful scripting, Moore has encouraged more thought, more introspection than has any book I've read in weeks. Such is his talent. He need not supply all the answers. To direct the reader into asking the right questions is sufficient.

This talented Briton has earned a well-deserved reputation for his probing examinations of the human condition, and praise is no less warranted here. In this single issue, he has developed his characters more fully than some comics writers achieve in a year. His tight, realistic dialogue reveals far more than do a dozen melodramatic thought balloons. Rorshach exhibits traits that are in many ways the exact opposite of my own, yet so fully fleshed is he that I found myself fascinated by him.

Superheroes inhabit this world, but in every other way it is as real as that outside our windows, and it needs to be portrayed in a realistic manner. For this reason, I was not sure Dave Gibbons would prove to be the right choice as artist of the series. I have always thought him to be a good artist, but there has been about his work a hit too much stolid cleanness. It's as if every panel was drawn by rote, structured in precise accordance with some unwritten rulebook. One could almost picture Gibbons at his drawing table—dressed in tails and white gloves.

Here, however, he has managed to ruffle those fine lines somewhat, adding much-needed gristle to the meat and bones of his pencilling. In doing so, he has not sacrificed the clarity of his images in the least, but rather has enhanced the dramatic impact of them. The result is the finest visual package I have ever seen from him.

It is my understanding that DC's Publicity Manager, Peggy May, is restricted by a rather tight budget. I can readily believe that; until recent years comics companies seemed to do little in the way of promoting their material. It is also understandable that Peggy would then have to focus the bulk of her efforts on one or two projects.

It is likewise understandable that DC's two cornerstone characters, Batman and Superman, are receiving the lion's share of current attention. Frank Miller is interviewed by *Rolling Stone*. John Byrne appears on the NBC Nightly News.

By contrast, *Watchmen* has received little advance publicity. As of writing, it has not even enjoyed the benefit of in-house ads in current comics. Hopefully this is one of the times when I, as a fan critic, can help make a difference by urging you to buy the first issue of this truly intriguing maxi-series. But you need to make even more of a difference. The circulation of this column doesn't approach that of the least of DC's titles. So those of you who read this, and know from experience whether your tastes coincide with mine, should in turn encourage your friends to give the book a try.

On the other hand, I am not out to spark yet another of the speculative feeding frenzies that have marred the release of such recent titles as *Dark Knight* and *Miracleman*. The thought of thousands of copies of *Watchmen* sitting safely ensconced in Mylar snugs chills me to the bone.

It is a *book*—not an investment. It deserves to be read, to be savored on the palate of your mind, to be discussed with friends. It is a story of ideas and ideals—one into which Alan Moore obviously put a great deal of thought and effort.

It touches you on every level. It makes you feel and it makes you think. Seldom have I found myself so eagerly anticipating subsequent issues of any comic book series.

I highly recommend it.

BREAKING CURFEW

THE MIDNITE SKULKER #1
written, illustrated, and published by LARRY DOBIAS
$1.75

It seems that every time I turn around nowadays, I am finding new comics that began as strips appearing in *Comics Buyer's Guide*.

I wonder if *CBG* can be held liable?

COMICS IN REVIEW

What I have sitting in front of me is not just *The Midnite Skulker* but, as the cover proclaims, "E. Larry Dobias' the Midnite Skulker with Captain Airhead." Name above the title. As in Meryl Streep, Robert Redford, Frank Miller. I hope you're all suitably impressed. I must confess to being rather unfamiliar with E. Larry's name. Captain Airhead did ring a bell, though.

It's what I call anyone who would pay $1.75 for a book like this.

E. Larry could have gone for originality, but hey, that's been done before, right? Instead, he chose to do something *really* clever: spoof Secret Wars and Crisis. It is my fervent hope that when Marvel's new Universe and DC's new Superman appear we will at last be free of Secret/Crisis parodies. Since Secret Wars was a joke to begin with, making fun of it is a bit like hitting someone in the face with a pie: easy to do, but a gag that lost its comedic potential ages ago.

There is a story of sorts here, which I will quickly re-cap for the benefit of the masochists in the audience. In the beginning, E. Larry's case of characters is teleported from Earth-CBG to another dimension. Simultaneously, all the heroes from Earth-M (Mutant), Earth-D (Defective) and Earth-I (Independent) are also transported to this strange place. If you can't tell which respective comic companies these heroes represent, then you deserve to read this comic.

The villain behind these machinations is called—the Behinder. He demands that the various sets of heroes fight each other for dominance. Along the way, we get spoofs of such diverse continuity mavens as Roy Thomas and Phillip Jose Farmer, and a dig at Jim Shooter and Dick Giordano. In the story's rousing finale, the Midnite Skulker saves the day, and all is as it once was.

Except for those of us who will be forever haunted by the memory of having read this mess.

Once again the luck of the draw has driven home to me the point that all is relative. After reading *The Midnite Skulker*, I was tempted to take out a lifetime subscription to *Constellation Graphics*! If redeeming value was the sole criterion, any court in the land would judge this book to be obscene.

There is not a single glimmer of originality, creativity, charm, wit, or humor to be found in this paragon of mediocrity. Throw in the fact that this has to be some of the easiest material in the world to milk for laughs, and its inability to even raise a smile makes it seem even more monstrously bad.

I think one of the problems is that these erstwhile cartoonists lose sight of the fact that *CBG* seems willing to publish *any* cartoon sent to them, no matter how inane. They regularly run strips that no self-respecting high school newspaper would even consider. The only one that shows any consistent humor is "Everett True," thanks to veteran Tony Isabella.

Unfortunately, this constant exposure has given some creators misplaced delusions of adequacy. As a result, we get something like *The Midnite Skulker*.

It doesn't even have the benefit of good artwork in its favor. The graphics are at the same amateur level as the script. You don't mind taking a few seconds to read a strip like this when it appears on the funnies page of *CBG*, but there's no way you'd be willing to pay money for an entire book devoted to it—and now E. Larry is planning a second volume to reprint the *CBG* strips!

Surely even Capt. Airhead will think twice before purchasing that tome.

GRAPHICS VIOLENCE

CONSTELLATION GRAPHICS #1
written and illustrated by Various
Stages Comics
$1.50

There was a time, in the not-too-distant past, when fans would gather around their kitchen tables to write and draw their own comics. A few hours after school each day, a few bucks spent on photo-copying, and you were ready to distribute a couple hundred copies of your very own book. Not too many people noticed, but you didn't really mind—a book was out there with your name on it, and you had enjoyed a useful learning experience. With time, practice and the right amount of talent, you might even be ready for the big time someday.

But the times, as Dylan so aptly put it, they are a-changing.

Amateurs have discovered they can scrape together a couple of *thousand* dollars and put a book on the stands that will occupy a space right next to *X-Men*. They can even get an established pro to render an illustration for them; one that will grace a four-color, laser-scanned cover. They can slap a hefty price tag on it.

Open up those slick covers, however, and between them you will usually find the same crude offerings cranked out by the dedicated kids who used to cluster around that kitchen table a decade ago.

Some things never change.

Such is basically what you get with *Constellation Graphics #1*, a collection of three stories that aren't stories at all. They are merely episodes. The first of these is "Ultiman," written by Jeff Kear and illustrated by Joe Singleton. An orbiting satellite is struck by a meteor and sent plunging back into Earth's atmosphere, on a collision course with a city in New Hampshire. Before it can strike, a costumed man flies up to meet the satellite, hurling it back into the depths of space.

The following day—April 14, 2019—a press conference is held. One of those in attendance appears to be Clark Kent, wearing a fedora (?). A bearded gentleman introduces them to the hero of the hour, Ultiman.

The End.

That's it: the entire story. Short and sweet. Six pages and out. When you consider that two pages of this vignette have no words at all and the last page has but one word in a single illustration, this yarn takes about two minutes to read—roughly half the time it must have taken the scripter to write it.

This comes off as nothing more than the effort of a couple of kids who know a good hero when they see him, and are smart enough to know that Superman is copyrighted by another company. Even a Superman story, however—with the familiar characters—could not be told effectively in six pages. It certainly can't be done with a hero about whom we know nothing.

© 1986 Constellation Graphics

Ultiman does not speak a word of dialogue, nor is he given a single thought balloon. All we know about him is that he wears a costume, flies, and has superstrength—a description that fits a dozen already existent heroes.

The inclusion of Clark Kent in the story might be indicative of a sense of humor at least, and a sign that the series will poke fun at superheroes; though there is nothing here to really show that such is its intent.

Some advice to scripter Jeff Kear, who writes that the reporters can only have one question "a peice" and must "be brief": apiece is one word and "i" before "e" except after "c", etc. These spelling errors may not have been his fault—considering the crudity of the lettering here and throughout the book, it may have been done by his 10-year-old brother.

Joe Singleton shows some promise as an artist, but he appears to be a year or two away from reaching anywhere near a professional level of craftsmanship.

The second story, "Visionquest," has the advantage of being ten pages in length, but succeeds in telling a story no better than did "Ultiman."

Nine men, women, and children are wandering through the Nevada desert when they are inexplicably attacked by three helicopters. We then get a long fight scene between the choppers and the wanderers, who exhibit various paranormal powers. One of the drifters is seriously wounded, and the decision is made to return to Las Vegas, so that she might receive medical attention.

The End.

Scripter Jeff Valentine has done a slightly better job of developing characterization in this story, but most of it is lost in the fury of flying lead. No doubt both he and Kear, in all the features presented in this book, hoped that by starting in the middle of their respective stories they would be able to intrigue the readers, entice them to come back for more. It doesn't work. The stories are so embryonic and sparsely written that you couldn't care less about these characters and their situations.

Jeff Kear stepped from behind his typewriter to pencil "Visionquest," and he shows a great deal more potential as an artist than as a scripter. He too is not yet up to professional standards, however.

The final feature is "Wild Star," also by Valentine and Kear. A bearded, bedraggled man watches a television interview with an author who has written a biography of a man called Wild Star, who has apparently been dead for six years. The bearded man walks outside, mutters "I remember," and proceeds to fly away. He travels to an abandoned underground complex, where he is confronted by three people who plan to kill him.

The End.

As you can see, this story follows the same formula as the others. The only difference is the inker—Bob Allen. Bob is bound to make it into the pro ranks. Not because he has talent—his heavy inks ruin Kear's pencils—but because he has audacity. He has plastered his stylized signature on the title page of the story. Mind you, the penciller did not see fit to sign the work—but the *inker* did! With this kind of chutzpah, Mr. Bob will probably be running Stages Comics within a month.

Provided it's still in business a month from now, which is questionable, though with glorious optimism they have announced the imminent publication of an Ultiman mini-series (composed of what—six 6-page issues?). This premiere issue ends with a pin-up pencilled by pro Kerry Gammill and the news that Bill Willingham has illustrated the cover for issue #2.

Who do they think is going to *buy* #2—Willingham's mother? *Constellation Graphics* is a project that should have remained on these fellas' kitchen table. It is simple and amateurish and has absolutely nothing to recommend it.

The End.

BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

The sixth and final issue of the Epic Comics mini-series *The One* has fallen into my clutches. Most of the worthwhile material coming from Marvel at the moment bears the Epic stamp, and Rick Veitch's apocalyptic tale of love and death is near the top. The conclusion of this saga is especially delightful to those of us who still cherish memories of the '60s. Now would be a good time to pick up the entire series. The market being what it is, you can probably still get all of them for close to cover price, whereas last week's *X-Men* has already been marked up to five bucks.

As Rick leaves this solo effort, he will be joining the creative team of another of my favorite titles, *Swamp Thing*, which is also reaching a conclusion of sorts. Issue #50 marks the end of the enthralling "American Gothic" storyline. Alan Moore continues as the book's scripter—do you need any higher recommendation? ●

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Illustration by FRED HEMBECK character — Marvel Comics Group

MATT LEVIN
44 Lincoln Avenue
Northampton, MA 01060

The Walking Man Talks

Ha! I'd like to thank you and Scott McCloud for his review of *Walking Man*—A cyclical, very poetic sort of narrative—that's nice, thank you.

I'm pleased to say there are now nine issues of *Walking Man* available, and I promise one more for each of the next three months. The story so far is that the walking man's showed up—it's possible he fell (or jumped) from the clouds or came up out of the mud or was hatched from a unicorn-hatching shell. He's followed around by rabbits and dragons, mostly, and two moons who tell (their view of) what's going down.

"Walking Man" is my on-going experimental title, in which I'm trying each issue to make use of layout, design, panel shapes, and arrangements, as well as elements like musical notation (for voice, and for handclapping, or foot-tapping), photobackgrounds, and such.

I work with rubber stamps for the challenge of it—to make stuff redundant, rubber-stamped images leap and hide. I'd like to demonstrate that comics-making is open ground, even if y'can't draw.

Walking Man has been an on-time monthly for nine issues, and though Scott didn't mention 'm, WM has been accompanied by five issues of *Musicomics*, which each illustrate an original song, include lead sheets, and will continue infrequently. Starting April first, WM will be accompanied by three monthly issues of *An Alphabet of Dragons*, and six issues of *Halfway House (Home of the Zombie)*.

Dragons features 10 different hand-drawn beasts each issue, one for each letter A-Z . . . plus! HH deals with feeling trapped in your room, with suicide and redemption, zombies and poetry. WM will continue the story of what happens following this guy around, in the sky, by the pond, & underground.

Scott says WM "can be a rewarding experience." Thanks, Scott! Jeez, I hope—!

P.S. They's still any 3 for $1 plus a stamp!

★ *And a bargain at half the price! Who could resist a comic about suicide, redemption, zombies, and poetry?* —*DS*

PATRICK STEVENS
Kansas City, MO

Hue and Cry

I find it ironic that you should run my complaint about cover color in an issue that has probably the best colored cover ever seen on *Amazing Heroes* [#86]. I would suggest getting Mark Wheatley, Kathryn Mayer, and Alex Wald as permanent cover colorists.

HENRY KUJAWA
Camden, NJ

As Time Goes By

I just read your "Special Post-Crisis Issue," and I must say I applaud the sheer, staggering effort that went into it! The only part I neglected to read was the issue-by-issue recounting, only because—can you believe this?—I haven't read the series itself yet (or most DC's for the last two years—I plan to catch up eventually by reading them on a month-by-month basis, as they came out, but my current schedule doesn't allow the time . . .). The cover by George Perez shows again how far this formerly "cartoony" artist has come, and was a beautiful portrait of DC's three "greatest" heroes (the most famous, the ones whose books were never cancelled and who each had their own TV series over the years!) as well as a brief cross-section of other "survivors."

All this got me thinking. *What if* (to quote Roy Thomas) DC had decided to go the other way, and save the mis-named "Earth-2" instead of its latter-day replacement, "Earth-1"? Suppose they had decided to throw common business sense to the winds

and gone instead for a more realistic approach? Here's what we might have ended up with: a Superman who would have been one of the founders of *both* the JSA and the JLA, and happily married to Lois Lane for many years; a Wonder Woman happily married to the one-and-only original Steve Trevor (the others never having existed); a Batman whose *Dark Knight* adventures could be told by Frank Miller in the *present* tense (his supposed "death" so badly botched by Levitz & Staton in all places, *Adventure Comics*, could be made to have never happened as a result of history re-shuffling, and we could have both the Huntress and Nightwing); a Barry Allen whose Flash identity could have been inspired by the real-life Jay Garrick, then in semi-retirement (the same could have been worked with Green Lantern, Hawkman, etc.).

If this had happened, all of DC's wartime history (and Roy Thomas's massive contributions to it) would have remained intact, and only the mistakes of the '50s on up (ever since "Earth-2" was introduced) would be eliminated, and we'd have a single cohesive, accessible tapestry of truly epic and legendary proportions. This kind of thing will probably never happen, though, in the continuing atmosphere in fictional circles of trying to stop time and keep the characters the same age, no matter how much real-time passes for the readers. That's why (until 1959) Sherlock Holmes' adventures were being updated, James Bond's film exploits still are (could anyone right now imagine a "period" Bond film—set during the cold war of the 1950s?) and Marvel Comics is currently re-writing its entire fictional "history." There've been exceptions: Doc Savage remains a character of the '30s and '40s (perhaps because his series was ended after [almost] 20 years, and subsequent revivals have remained true to the period). The Avengers (John Steed of the British secret service) made numerous references to just how long Steed had served his country when it returned as *The New Avengers*, and look at what Howard Chaykin's done with *The Shadow*! That's got to be the only time I've ever seen a series "updated" that many years while not violating the existing continuity!

I suppose it's wishful thinking to try to slow down time, but the nature of the universe is change, and you can't hold onto the past forever, except as a memory. I guess a line of "period" superhero books wouldn't be practical, but once enough time has passed—who knows? After all, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* with Jeremy Brett and David Burke is probably the best Holmes series ever done, but look how many decades it took to happen!

T.M. MAPLE
Weston, Ontario, Canada

Crisis and Genocide

Your "Special Post-Crisis Issue" (#91) was certainly an enjoyable and intriguing one, even though it cost (aarrggghhh) $4.95 up here in the low-value-currency country of Canada. (And say, it's really nice to know that I'm now in a "post-crisis" phase and that the rest of my life will be just chock full of wonderful events, with nary a dark cloud (or red sky!) to trouble me. Oh, that isn't what you meant? Well, it was a nice thought while it lasted anyway . . . .)

It is interesting that the original plan was to have the heroes forget about the Crisis events. This might not have been a bad thing. Even though we haven't seen the full after-effects of the Crisis yet, I have been a bit troubled by one thing—or lack of it. In the Crisis, billions upon billions of people perished—a virtually impossible-to-imagine number of them, in fact. Sure, they were in parallel universes, but each was a unique, living being. The heroes know that this happened—they witnessed a lot of it. In the face of so many deaths, would not at least some of them be overcome by depression? Such incredible loss of life must have *some* emotional impact. Maybe it didn't seem quite real to them. Maybe the deaths of comrades overshadows the death of strangers. Maybe it's simply too large to be conceived—and hence has no impact. While I don't want to dwell on the morality or effects of what after all was simply a decision to "rationalize" a fictional universe, it does seem to me that such things as I mention above should be affecting at least some of the heroes.

In R.A. Jones' riveting review of *Crisis*, I see many points on which I could contend with him, but I will not do so here. One reason for this is that I would expect you'll get such letters from people more qualified to do so (or more *involved* than me). Secondly, Jones makes a good point that many of the faults he finds could be explained away, but that such saving explanations are no more (or little more) justified in the story than are his interpretations. However, I agree with him that *Crisis* was a monumental task that was honestly worked on by all and that I enjoyed it enormously. Indeed, in some ways, the way in which *Crisis* was done is less important than the fact that it was done and that it will continue to have a great influence over DC's magazines in the years to come.

If the debate about the relative merits of *Crisis* and *Secret Wars* is not over by now, this issue of *AH* should do it. After all, who would devote a full issue to analyzing *Secret Wars*?

★ *If there's been a debate then I must've missed the part where somebody actually preferred* Secret Wars *to* Crisis. —*DS*

MIKE METTLER
Des Moines, IA

Crisis Review Reviewed

The latest *AH* offering I have before me is ish 91, the special all-Crisis issue, and a massive undertaking indeed. Highly informative and well-done and all that. Andy Mangels, a friend of mine, did some marvelous, painstaking categorizing and time-lining.

However, probably the most significant piece to me from this issue was R.A. Jones's "Crisis in Review." I've said it before and I'll say it again: R.A.'s is the first thing I look at each and every ish right after I see the front cover. I don't agree with his every assessment, but the man has my respect and I favor his judgment highly. I'm not quite sure what it is, but R.A.'s style and honesty is about the best when it comes to actual reviewing. *The Journal*'s reviewers, gosh bless 'em, are forever trapped between the pages of their thesauruses (or is that thesauri?), but R.A. just tells it like it is. (Aside to R.A.—come on up to the ChicagoCon this year. I'd love to shake your hand.)

R.A.'s issue by issue breakdown (irony intended) was quite a revelation for me. Although I had felt while reading *Crisis* that often times nothing much was actually happening storywise, that there was a lot of padding and mindless action scenes, I instead suspended disbelief in the story at hand in favor of the major repercussions that the story would have on the future. Indeed, R.A. shows that Marv's story is full of more holes than those gangsters in the St. Valentine's day massacre.

The point R.A. made about editing was well-taken. I think, though, that Crisis was completed at such a hectic pace, for the sake of getting it out there, that editing would have bogged the book down in endless delays. This book was more for the side of management than it was for the side of devout fans, and those historians of the medium groaned while the rest read it starry-eyed and gosh-wowed.

I think Marv's work in all of 1985 suffered, especially *The Teen Titans*. Only now that the *Crisis* is over have Titans reinterested me. I remember in many a lettercol last year Marv saying how he was constantly finishing this script or that one on his portable word processor as he sat on a plane from this city or that. In fact, Marv had his processor with him at the B5 ChicagoCon and was scripting *Crisis* B or 9 at the DC table.

The writer-editor concept is one that should be addressed. No one likes to have their work criticized, and those who have the writer-editor luxury seem to scream the loudest. I think, though, it also has to be noted that those w-e's that need the most "e" are the ones who work for the major companies, the ones who work on characters other than ones they own themselves. An editing hand can take an objective look, note logic flaws and the like. It's not like those who write for the two biggies have the most control over their stories—they are writing for a certain audience, a large general audience, and stories have to appeal to all. This is why those of us who are growing beyond the teenage years tend to look down on the output of the majors, we've simply grown beyond it.

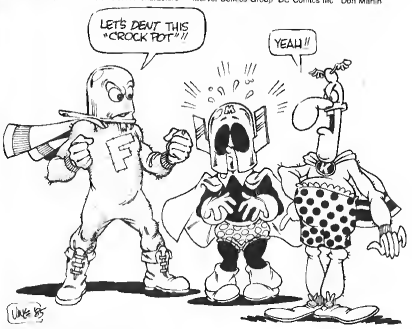
This is where we turn to the alternatives and those specialty titles that have limited appeal but are genuinely entertaining and daring. And not coincidentally enough, these creators are the ones who don't need much editing. Eisner, Hernandez Bros., Sim, and Chaykin, to name a few. Their visions are labors of love, painstaking love, and they have a master plan. They are not grinding out stories for the deadline and the management, but really for themselves and other like-minded souls. They have planned in advance what they want to accomplish over a long period of time, and it's to the great advantage that us seekers of excellence are able to purchase and devour such a product.

(I suppose I should mention Alan Moore here—though it doesn't matter where, since this is turning into patented Mettler jumble. If a writer such as Moore had tackled *Crisis*, it would have been a much different story. Is it any wonder it's taken *Watchmen* such a long time to surface? Moore is taking an involved look at his storyline, and I know it's going to be stupendous. However, in the eyes of DC management, I'm sure they would never go for a script that Moore would have turned in for *Crisis*: "I've always loved you, Lex." for example; his would have been too complex. No, DC needed a mainstream writer for their mainstream overhaul, and it probably would have been a mess regardless of whomever from the offices wrote it.)

Well, I see I've rambled long and hardy, much longer than I have in a

Illustration by GREG WILCOX

Illustration by VINCE MUSACCHIA characters: Marvel Comics Group, DC Comics Inc., Don Martin



long time, especially to youze guys. But it felt good to just sit down and pound away. Which brings to mind... Jeezus H... I've never been so pissed at a lettercol than I have been at yours lately! Never before have I read such a collection of gradeschool crybaby whining, bitching and name-calling than in your last six plus issues. Ish 91's offerings took the cake. Are you that desperate for real, thoughtful letters? Ye gods. Grow up, children.

★ *Marv Wolfman just happened to drop by the Fantagraphics office tonight as I was doing the lettercol (he wanted to check out the art on his* Anything Goes! *story). He mentioned that he had to compromise more of his original* Crisis *storyline than he was really happy with. So, give the man some credit,* Crisis *was probably a lot more coherent before it went through "committee." If you like his* Titans *work you should be happy to know that George Perez will be returning to pencil* Titans *with Eduardo Barreto probably doing inks.* —*DS*

DON SCHICK
Pensacola, FL

Crisis and Continuity

In response to your all-Crisis issue, I'd like to make a few comments on the *Crisis* series, the articles about the series, and Robert Plunkett, Jr's letter (not that I expect Joe Pappelardo to care what I have to say!) (The letters have been getting malicious lately, haven't they?)

First, let it be known that I enjoyed *Crisis* immensely. I didn't agree with everything that occurred (Supergirl's death being most prominent), but that does not change the fact that, for the most part, the series was well written—despite the gaping plot holes aptly pointed out by R.A. Jones (nice review!)—and beautifully drawn. I, too, feel Supergirl's death was a mistake; I didn't mind her lack of historical continuity. She could have been one dynamite character (not that she wasn't special already) with the right creative team, as was evidenced in *Crisis* itself. I do feel the series was needed and well intended.

I found both "*Crisis* Obituaries" and "Who's Who in *Crisis*" to be an enormous help in ferreting out who everyone was and who didn't survive. The "Who Doomed the Flash?" article was a humorous piece (Martha Quinn suspect? Never! She's too cute to be so dastardly!). I happen to agree that the character probably killed himself. I was a Flash fan long ago. I haven't picked up an issue in over ten years. I just lost interest, as I guess the rest of fandom did also. "Making a *Crisis* of It" may have been the highlight of the issue. Learning the reasons behind certain developments occurring was interesting and informative. The Roy Thomas interview and the calender were of mild interest, but the Charlton heroes history was quite boring.

Now to the "meat" of this letter: the rebuttal of Robert Plunkett, Jr's letter. While I am not one of those "fans who monopolize comics conventions, letter columns, and the attentions of the creators"—at least I don't think I am—I do believe a series should have a certain amount of continuity within itself and with the other happenings in its "universe." This is not to say that I won't read comics that don't fit in the continuity or that dispose of older stories that conflict with current plotlines (such as the incident in *Batman and the Outsiders* recently). That being said, I don't believe the new DC universe is going to limit either the creators or the readers in any way. DC has recently released *Mazing Man*, a likeable character who is not and will not be part of the new universe. I believe that *Electric Warrior* also fits this category (I don't read it so I'm not certain), as does *Lords of the Ultra Realm*. Furthermore, I'm sure no one would object to a creator having a flashback story to handle any situation that had to be told that did not fit *Crisis* continuity. From these examples, as well as the fact that John Byrne will be changing the Superman mythos, albeit made possible by *Crisis*, DC has shown that it is not averse to producing quality material that does not fit current DC Universe continuity.

Comparing comics with detective novels does not prove continuity is wrong. The publishing companies, for the most part, do not own the characters in detective novels; the author does. Under these conditions publishing companies could not enforce a strict continuity even if they would like to. On the other hand, DC does own the characters in their books, and if it takes a stricter continuity to reach a larger audience they should do everything possible to make it happen, which was the purpose of *Crisis*.

As for the death depicted in *Crisis*, look at it realistically. People die in wars. *Crisis* was a war for survival of the universe. To think that no characters would die is pure fantasy, even in a work of fantasy. As for death in comics in general, death is part of life. Comics are about life, albeit superhuman life, still; death exists and needs to be shown. To believe that even fictional characters should live forever is naive.

The last item I'd like to discuss is the accusation that DC is replacing its legends. Not so. I like to think DC is improving its legends and creating new ones. While it is true many older characters are no longer around due to *Crisis*, all of the comics that featured these creations in the past are still here. For those who do not agree that the new characters, those around after *Crisis*—changed or not, are or ever will be legends, those back issues will always be full of page after page of living legends for as long as the characters mean something special to the reader.

★ *A general note here about the letters column since both Don and Mike mentioned it. I could do without the name calling and hysterics entirely. I'd like to see some thoughtful letters that aren't merely reacting to the latest issue of X-Factor. Not that those letters are bad, but why haven't I seen more on the Kirby art work controversy? I'd like to see general letters on the industry, i.e. Is the comics market glutted? Is another shakeout on the horizon? And I'd like to see a lot more critical discussion. Stuff like, is Marvel mutant paranoia a metaphor for adolescent insecurity? Is adolescent insecurity the secret theme of Marvel comics since the beginning of Spider-Man? Is there a comparable binding theme at DC? And please type them. And pleeeeze stop acting like comic book characters are real people. Honestly. I've been moved by a story or two, but there's a difference between suspending your disbelief in a piece of fiction and losing touch with reality.*

COUSIN DICK
Chico, CA

Contrite Cuz

I'm sorry for causin' you boys so much trouble, after seein' the letters from Wild Bill Middleton and Joe Pappelardo in issue #91. I guess we're all just gonna have to try harder not to get these fellers so riled up again. Let's try our best to make Amazin Readers every bit as good as those wonderful letters pages in Mighty Marvel's books! But let me say sumpin' to these dudes first.

Bill, you're readin' me all wrong. I love Miller beer, the Baptist church, U.S. 1, Al Milgrom and Marvel Comics. I don't want Marvel to change a durn thing! I just want to bless 'em as they keep on truckin' down that long highway of success.

Joe, the idear that you paid $2.25 just to read my letter makes me wanna burst with pride! But ya don't have to waste your hard-earned money no more, pardner—just subscribe to *Amazing Heroes* and save money like the rest of us cowpokes! And you're right, Joey. I don't expect ya to sit and listen to my opinions—I expect ya to read 'em like any other trucker!

Speakin' for myself, I don't really buy this magazine for the letters—I buy it to find out who the hell is guest-starring in *Power Pack* this month or what the hell Al is up to now. Or what that damn fool R.A. Jones is saying about Al this month!

Keep up the good work, fellers!

★ *Cuz, you obviously subscribe to the Joe Bob Briggs school of criticism. Have you ever read any of Lee K. Abbott's short stories? You'd love "Living Alone in Iota." So would the rest of you buckaroos for that matter.*

Illustration by QUENTIN B. HOOVER, character © DC Comics Inc.

Illustration by BRUCE TIMM, character © DC Comics Inc.

small press watch

by Scott McCloud

Small press is a catch all term for comics with low enough print runs that any profit is negligible. Many are photocopied and all titles listed here are in black and white on white paper unless otherwise noted. Page count *includes covers*.

To order any of the items on this page, just send a short note with your name and address on it listing the comic(s) you want and enclose your payment. Cash is fine and recommended on small orders but make sure it doesn't show through the envelope. Also tape down any loose change. The address for each item appears at the beginning of its review. Please *do not* try to order from me or from *Amazing Heroes*.

I'll indicate postage on each item. "Ppd" = post paid (price includes postage). Stamps unless otherwise noted should be the regular 22¢ first class type.

Letters of comment are welcomed by just about everyone and if you have comics of your own, trades can often be arranged. You're welcome to send them to me too. I can only review a fraction of what comes out, but I'll definitely read it and try to respond with a postcard at least. You can reach me at PO box 698, Tarrytown NY 10591-0698. (Comments about this column should be sent to *AH* as usual.)

—SCOTT McCLOUD

80 pages/5½" x 8½"/offset quality, stiff paper.

CASUAL CASUAL #17, edited by Peter Dako. $2.50 ppd. from 698a Queen Street West Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6J 1E7. Adults only.

In the past few months, I've recommended some pretty strange publications in this column. Since most are only available by mail, those of you who followed up on my suggestions were essentially taking a chance on these mysterious comics. Compared to film, TV, the written word, or even music, our medium traditionally involves little risk-taking of this sort. Most comics are sold on the rack where we can browse to our hearts' content (at least where *I* shop you can) and comics are, after all, a pretty browsable type of merchandise. It's a big step to send away REAL MONEY for a comic you've never even seen before, especially one drawn by (gasp!) *amateurs*, but whatever the perils are to us consumers, I think it's important that we remember who's taking the real risks in this game—the artists themselves.

Toronto's Peter Dako publishes *Casual Casual*, an anthology of risky comics and ideas. Originally published as a short solo effort by Dako to accompany the Toronto based band "Casual Casual" (which he played with), CC has since grown in size dramatically. The latest issue is about 80 pages long (42 of them comics), including contributions from about a dozen writers and artists.

Dako's own "Big Boy" stories are featured prominently in each issue. "Big Boy" is drawn in a disjointed, somewhat awkward style that plays havok with traditional ideas of "good drawing," but is also graphically sophisticated and very expressive. It is "ugly art" in the best sense of that term, includes many of the junk culture elements so rampant in the "post-modern" generation, and is pretty funny if you're in the right mood.

Also included in issue #17 is "O Canada Our Home and Native Land" by Vancouver B.C., resident Carel Moiseiwitsch. "O Canada" details the persecution of Japanese Canadians during WWII (apparently similar to what happened here in the U.S.) in Moiseiwitsch's aggressively distorted style. Comics-wise, it's not one of her better efforts, but the subject is a compelling one.

Other features include: "I Have Seen the Wind" by Michael Will, a well-written five-page anecdote marred, unfortunately, by some overly clever panel arrangements; "Shock Treatment," a mannered and sterile but challenging piece by French collaborators Fournier and Slocombe; a short, painterly strip by the artfully difficult and abrasive "Placid" revealing interviews with both Slocombe and Placid; Mary Fleener's "Mojo" (which you already have if you ordered the Ray Zone package—sorry about that) and the proverbial much more.

As with any book I mention here, there's no guarantee that *Casual Casual* will be right for you. It's a fairly difficult title to warm up to without some previous exposure to work of this sort. Of course, with or without our approval, CC's artists will continue to take the same aesthetic risks as always, and they'll be putting more at stake than a couple of bucks.

FOX COMICS #10 and #11. Edited by David Vollicka and others.
$1.50 ppd. from David Vollicka, 17 Brookville Road, Toorak, Victoria, 3142, Australia. Mature readers.

Also in the category of digest-sized, black-and-white-experimental-small-press-comic-anthologies-from-foreign-countries-where-they-talk-so-you-can-understandem is Australia's Fox Comics. Currently in its 11th issue, *Fox* is a bit more accessible and more informal than *Casual Casual*, but with a similar emphasis on unusual and innovative stories and art. The contributors hail from both Australia and England (with crossovers from the wonderful *Escape Magazine* in the latter case). Usually, about a half to a third of each issue is bland and forgettable, but the rest is consistently worthwhile and, at times, excellent. Among the better features in these two issues are Michael Graham's "Kleenex the Bear," which I can only describe as a cross between a calm Rory Hayes and Moebius's "Mysteries of Eroticism" (in other words: *indescribable*); Phil Elliot's "A to B," a psychologically involved short-subject, drawn in Elliot's typically spotless and elegant style; Ed Pinsent's "Drake Ullingsworth" stories, which, like Elliot's, say a great deal more than is at first apparent; and the highly personal comics of Chloe Brookes-Kenworthy. Again, *Fox* can be pretty rough in spots, maybe in part because the artists are having too much fun to get real picky about who they "invite in," but at its worst it's merely innocuous and at its best, fascinating.

© 1986 Michael Graham

28 pages/5½" x 8½"/(issue #11 is 32 pages)

SO WHO WANTS TO READ ONLY COMIC BOOKS ABOUT PEOPLE?

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